

# **Capital Improvement Projects Funding Summary**

(Combined Funding from Revenue Bond, Rescue Plan Act Funding, Reserves Allocations, Normal Budgeting Cycles) \* Addition Details Enclosed

## **Public Safety: \$8.5 Million total**

\*\*New Facility for E-911 Dispatch & Real Time Crime Center - \$4 Million

\*\*12 new Firefighter positions, equipment and salary structure adjustments - \$4.5 Million over next 3 years

## **Trails, Sidewalks & Pedestrian Projects: \$13 Million**

\*\*Trails, Sidewalks and Misc Pedestrian infrastructure - \$12 Million over the next 3 years

\*\*Funding for Additional Soft Trail Developments - \$1 Million

## **Parks Investments: \$14 Million**

\*\*Implementation of Master Parks Plan (TBD upon completion) - \$3.5 Million in 2024, 2025 Budget - \$3.5 Million

\*\*New Park in Northeast Jonesboro - \$3 Million

Also awaiting ruling on a \$1 Million Grant

\*\*Lacy Park Improvements / Indoor Turf Project - \$4 Million

\*\*Clubhouse at Shooting Sports Complex - \$3.5 Million

## **Street and Infrastructure Projects: \$12 Million**

\*\*Caraway Road Widening & Pedestrian Infrastructure – I-555 to Fox Meadow - \$6 Million

\*\*Street Overlays - \$6 Million (\$2 Million in '24, '25'2026 Budgets

## **Humanitarian Support Funding - \$500,000**

**Forum Theater Upgrades - \$250,000**

**Land Bank Development Incentives - \$500,000**

City Administration is proposing a multi-layered capital improvement plan that utilizes 4 different funding streams – Revenue Bond, ARPA, Reserve allocation and yearly budget appropriations. The process for approving the plan would involve multiple approvals as follows:

- A vote by council to support pledging roughly 75% of Franchise Fees to debt service for a revenue bond. This would create roughly \$17.5 million in projects
- A vote by Council to allocate our American Rescue Plan Act funding toward specific projects or plans
- A vote by Council to allocate reserves to restricted accounts for specific projects
- Yearly votes by Council on specific projects as identified in the annual budget

It is important to note that the plan consists of multiple actions and funding sources. Just because a project is not listed to be funded by the “bond” doesn’t mean it is not possible to fund it through one of the other streams.

The earliest date that each of these actions could be voted on by Council would be Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>. ARPA and Reserves appropriations would be just a resolution that would run the normal appropriations course similar to other ARPA actions.

The allocations once approved from ARPA and Reserves would involve creating a restricted capital improvement fund. At that point individual project funding and contracting would follow the normal requisition path similar to when appropriations are made from the current capital improvement carryover fund.

In summary – the revenue bond is only +/- \$17.5 million of the allocations pie. The others consist of \$8 million in ARPA funding (which needs to be allocated by the end of 2024, \$5 million of reserves, and place holders in the next 3 budget cycles.

## **REVENUE BOND - \$17.5 Million**

Projects funded by a revenue bond are limited to those that can be completed within a 3-year window. Considering the amount of planning and process-related functions that municipal projects commonly face, this is a notable detail. For that reason, projects that require more of a long-term buildout don't fit that application. A 3 year completion window typically means the possible projects are already in an advanced stage of planning or design and primarily only lack capital infusion.

Under that logic, it would be unrealistic to anticipate that the full \$10-11 million in the total proposed trail and pedestrian pathways could be completed under that timeframe, so that specific area will span across multiple funding streams as outlined in this document.

Cost estimates are based on the most recent professional projections by third party firms. To be clear, estimates are simply that: estimates. With the City's bidding requirement processes, there is always an unknown until bids are opened and certified.

After discussions with you and City staff, the plan proposes the funding of:

**Completing the Shooting Sports Complex (Clubhouse Building)** – Estimated at \$3.5 million. Additional funding is being sought from the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission to help offset cost. The estimate is for the full building cost and was recently reevaluated by the Brackett & Krennerich architectural firm. This facility will complete the project as originally presented and approved by Council in 2017. Additionally a 10<sup>th</sup> trap field will need to be added to qualify the facility to host a high school state tournaments. Cost is not anticipated to be high on that expansion.

**New E-911 / Real Time Crime Center** – Estimated at \$4 million. The current facility is outdated, small, and inadequate for the needs of a dispatch center serving the entire county. It is simply past time to replace this facility. With the City's continued commitment to public safety and technology, the proposed facility would include space for a Real Time Crime Center.

Last year our City was recognized with a Trendsetter Award honoring the City for its work in becoming the first city in the state to establish such a center. This a state-of-the-art facility will expand the ability for police, fire, and streets to make informed decisions on critical matters. The facility would include 24 hour staffing so our infrastructure is always monitored. This is especially important for our parks and City facilities.

Dispatch centers have minimal distance restrictions in relation to active railroad tracks. For this reason, locating the facility on the campus of our police complex is not an option. Many cities intentionally separate the complexes for various reasons.

This would be the first piece in a plan to remove all city assets and personnel from the Washington Ave Justice Complex campus.

**Street and Road Improvements (Expansion of Caraway Road)** – \$6 to \$7 million per recent cost estimates by the Pickering Engineering firm.

For years the Caraway widening project has been on an unfunded project list for the City. In 2019, the City sought a BUILD Grant (now called a RAISE Grant) to fund it, but was unsuccessful in the application. For the better part of a decade the city has approved a significant amount of funding for rights-of-way acquisitions, utility relocations, engineering work and for design plans that are 100% complete and ready for execution.

A Caraway Road expansion project would be funded by multiple streams to help ensure 3-year window compliance. The structure presented projects that some final settlement would likely be needed in 2025 when the road is hopefully completed.

This request consist of a \$5 million bond appropriation and \$1 million budget appropriation in 2025. The current recommendation is to take 5 lanes out to Fox Meadow that would coincide with ArDOT interchange adjustments. The current two lane road is handling more than 15,000 vehicles a day and has been identified for some time as a need in the Master Street Plan passed by Council. While the original plan approved by Council did not include non-motorized accommodations, the updated plan sought does.

Another option was explored to narrow the street down to 3 lanes at LaTourette. This however only reduced total project costs by \$700,000 and would be much more expensive to readdress in a few years when congestion and safety concerns arise.

**Funding Trail and Pedestrian transportation projects** – \$5 Million Revenue Bond (\$11+ million across multiple funding veins). Out of necessity this category will need to be funded through multiple outlets due to time restrictions associated with a revenue bond.

The Connectivity Advisory Committee is reviewing and researching possible routes for specific consideration by Council on the priority order of numerous undeveloped portions of the One Jonesboro Connectivity Plan. Additional connections will be funded out of ARPA and future budgeting cycles.

## **American Rescue Plan Act Allocations**

As of Oct. 31 the City of Jonesboro has roughly \$8 million in available ARPA funding. In accordance to ARPA regulations, funds are required to be appropriated by the end of 2024. To date these funds have been delegated primarily for Quality of Place and Public Safety investments.

Staying with that current mindset, administration is proposing the fund balance be appropriated to the following project areas:

### **Land Bank funding for development Incentives - \$500,000**

In recent years the Land Bank has increased activity considerably and has proved to be a valuable asset for protecting sensitive properties. This proposal would allow a more robust line item budget and Council would then approve individual appropriations instead of authorizing repeated budget amendments for each transaction.

### **Pedestrian Street, Trail and Sidewalk projects - \$4.5 million**

Similar to appropriations described in the Revenue Bond portion of the capital improvement proposals, ARPA-funded pedestrian improvements will be focused on investing in a variety of pedestrian safety projects. Funding would primarily be intended for cross-section pedestrian improvements that include full trail and sidewalk projects, shared use paths, or street projects with a notable pedestrian benefit.

### **Indoor Turf Facility (Lacy Park) – Multiple Funding Streams - \$2.5 million ARPA, \$1.5 million Reserves**

In recent years increased interest in soccer and youth football leagues have identified a need for increased investments in our facility offerings. A large, regulation sized, indoor turf facility would allow for numerous competitive sports to continue even during inclement weather. Additionally, the facility could host any number of events that require a large open floorplan.

This plan proposes setting \$4 million aside in a specific capital improvement fund to go toward a future indoor complex. Based off early cost estimates, this amount would provide about half of the total facility cost and should help position the City to seek grants or private donations to complete the financial sourcing needed for construction. This would be the first piece of building out the Lacy Park property, near other soccer and football fields.

## **Humanitarian Support - \$500,000**

In addition to Community Development Block Grant funding, ADFA allocations and pass-through grant funding, administration proposes that Council place \$500,000 of Rescue Act funding in a restricted account to be solely accessed for humanitarian support efforts. Individual withdraws from restricted accounts would follow city purchasing and procurement processes and any allocations made above \$35,000, or require a contractual agreement, would be subject to Council approval and should stand on their own merit as a benefit to the intended protections.

Funding could be used to support programs that focus on emergency relief, 501(c)3 program support, facility construction, humanitarian-focused grant matches and partnership agreements with other government entities toward humanitarian support efforts.

## **Reserves Appropriations**

Jonesboro city ordinances require that the City keep emergency reserve funding on hand to maintain full government functions for a period of 2 months in the event of an emergency of unforeseen hardship. Reserve funding is also available to support specific City infrastructure or personnel investments. Additionally, reserve funds are used for matches to federal grants and Arkansas Department of Transportation projects such as overpasses or highway construction efforts.

As of 10/31/2023 total reserves held by the City of Jonesboro are \$33.2 million, of which \$9.6 million are required by ordinance. The required number will increase as more projects described in this plan are completed. In addition to projects outlined below, it is important to consider that in the next 3 to 5 years, the City will likely be asked to participate in multiple highway projects and will also need to construct a new fire station after ISO reviews in 2025 and purchase or construct a new JPD patrol branch facility.

This capital improvement plan proposes allocating \$5 million in non-required reserve funding toward multiple quality of place and recreational projects.

### **East Jonesboro Park Facility - \$2.25 million Reserves, \$750,000 2025 Budget allocation, additional grant funding requested.**

For more than a year, the City has been in discussions regarding a park project located behind the Journey and Cornerstone Church facilities near Baptist Hospital. Earlier this year the City applied for an Outdoor Recreation grant that would provide an additional \$1 million if the application is successful.

After discussions with Parks staff, \$3 million will fund significant improvements on the currently raw and undeveloped property. The plan under review would create roughly a 25-acre space that is much needed in East Jonesboro. The area is a good blend of open space and forest that will provide an excellent foundation for a premier park.

Long term plans for the park would include a community center, similar to others in the city. Plans and cost estimates for a community center facility construction have not yet been commissioned and would likely need to be addressed in a separate allocation when that time comes.

### **Indoor Turf Facility at Lacy Park - \$1.5 million from reserves (See ARPA allocation details for description)**

## **Forum Renovations - \$250,000**

The proposed capital improvement plan also seeks to invest in renovating existing City facilities. Over the last 3 years more than \$1 million in City funding has greatly improved the functionality and stability of The Forum theater. Discussions with City facilities management and the Foundation of Arts have identified a need for seat upgrades, audio equipment improvements and balcony space renovations.

## **Soft-Trails Development - \$1,000,000**

In 2022 the City partnered with Jonesboro Unlimited to create a soft trails master plan for Craighead Forest. The plan consisted of multiple phases and has received funding support from outside entities.

Construction on the system started in spring of 2023 and Phase 1 is set to be complete in late fall of this year. While primarily intended for mountain bikes, the trails have already proven to be beneficial to walkers and joggers as well.

The \$1 million requested for soft-trail funding in this proposal would complete the network proposed by the International Mountain Biking Association and provide funding for further soft-trail development in the city. If funding exceeds the final cost of phase 2, then it would remain in a restricted fund for future soft-trail developments.



## **Annual Budget Appropriations**

The fourth and final funding stream for the capital improvement plan consist of creating a roadmap for budget allocations over the next 3 years. Endorsement by City Council for these items would be part of the regular budgeting process. These consist of projects that will either take multiple years to complete, generalized areas of commitment, or to fund yet unidentified specific projects.

As part of the multi-year planning process, administration is projecting that total capital improvement dollars available via annual revenue streams must account for recent commitments of increased personnel cost for uniformed and non-uniformed employees, decreases in revenues from franchise fees and decreases in interest that would have been earned by allocations of city reserves. Resources placed in a restricted fund would continue to generate interest until completing the purchasing process.

*Note – projects that have previously been discussed that share funding streams are detailed in those sections. These include, Caraway Road, bike and pedestrian offerings, and an East Jonesboro Park.*

### **Increased Street Overlay Funding - \$2 million in each of the 2024, 2025, 2026 budget cycles**

Prior to 2022, the City spent on average \$500,000 a year on street overlay and refinishing projects. In the last two budgets, Administration and City Council have increased street infrastructure significantly. In 2023, street project investment was up more than 400%, resulting in better roads for Jonesboro residents, businesses and visitors. The proposed capital improvement plan seeks to continue the same high level of emphasis toward the City's large network.

Recent studies commissioned by the City have created a systematic order of priority via a technology-based grading system. These studies will be used to determine which streets are addressed next. It is likely that a new study will need to be commissioned in 2-3 years with updated road grades and information.

### **Implementation of Master Parks Plan - \$3,500,000 cumulative over the 2024, 2025 Budget Cycles (2026 TBD)**

Earlier this year, the City contracted with Halff Associates to create a Master Parks Plan for Jonesboro to help provide a road map to important quality of place improvements. It is fully anticipated that implementation cost will be significant and take a span of years to fulfill just the basics regarding facility and equipment updates. While the final plan has not been presented, administration is proposing we prepare to set aside funding for projects, staffing and equipment recommendations detailed in the plan.

It is important to note that items funded as a part of this process will follow normal City budgeting and purchasing guidelines. It is anticipated that some projects involving construction will take multiple budget years to complete.

An extension of instituting our master parks plan is placing a priority on improving current facilities. During our internal park facilities review and the ongoing processes associated with the Master Parks Plan creation, it is evident that the City needs to put our parks and playgrounds on what resembles a depreciation schedule. While Jonesboro parks are among the best in Northeast Arkansas, they do need to be periodically updated. This plan proposes that each year the city set aside funding to help reimagine a park space. Much like rotating fleet equipment, parks need to be in a state of reliable modernization to ensure they remain safe, fresh, up to date with trends and compliant with the most recent ADA advancements. This will ensure that all children have wonderful opportunities for recreation in the City of Jonesboro.

Full implementation of the Master Parks Plan will be a long-term process that will be included in annual budget discussions and planning moving forward.

## **Fire Department Investments - \$1,500,000 annual personnel cost increase**

During research of capital improvement projects, many discussions and planning sessions were held with JFD leadership regarding ISO, equipment and facility needs. Following a thorough study of the most recent ISO review, the largest point reduction levied to the City was in regard to total active firefighters on the scene of a structure fire, not initial response time. To directly address this need, Chief Marty Hamrick advised that the City of Jonesboro create 12 new firefighter positions to be distributed to ladder companies in the city. This would increase on-the-scene responders by as much as 25% and help ensure that staffs remain fully operational and effective in the event of injury, illness or vacation.

In addition to the increased firefighter headcount, the City will decline to trade in an engine during the purchase process of a new fire apparatus. This will allow for a second engine company to operate in the event of a large-scale emergency.

There is little doubt that when ISO returns for the next review in 2025, a new fire station will be recommended. While fire leadership knows general areas with a growing need, their recommendation is to wait for exact guidance to the most beneficial site. The additional positions created will have more than a year of experience at that time and will allow for a more seamless staffing transition.

The staffing investments detailed in this proposal, along with planned salary increases for existing JFD personnel, will total about \$1.5 million annually.

## **Police Facility and Operations Planning**

While 2023 included notable investments in police salaries and facility acquisitions, the City must plan for the relocation of operations currently housed in the Justice Complex and the “old City Hall” building. Both structures are in need of significant repairs at a minimum. Many of the structural challenges facing both facilities merit either a full rebuild or a full relocation.

As a result, City Admin has commissioned a facilities review study for a new patrol division facility. This study will include the long-term needs of a new facility and provide location guidance. Conversations are in process on multiple properties in the city, including several in close proximity to the current admin and investigations division facility.

Once a location is identified and a fair price for a building or land is negotiated, Council will be presented with a proposal for consideration.