

1. Briefly describe the reason for which you are requesting funding.

The City of Laramie is requesting \$289,650 in Coronavirus Relief Grant funding in order to offset costs incurred to communicate and plan the local emergency response; to implement public health orders; to provide adequate health and safety for City workers; and to design and implement policy and practice changes necessary in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Each of these initiatives is described in detail, including the major tasks within the proposed budget.

Expenditures funded by this request satisfy CARES act expenditure eligibility criteria, as follows:

- Public health expenses for communication and enforcement by a local government for public health orders related to COVID-19
- Public health expenses for disinfection of public areas and other facilities in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency
- Public health expenses for the acquisition and distribution of medical and protective supplies, including sanitizing products and personal protective equipment
- Payroll expenses for public safety, public health, and similar employees whose services are substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency
- Expenses to modify judicial proceedings and functions to comply with Wyoming Supreme Court Orders
- Expenses of actions to facilitate compliance with COVID-19 related public health measures, including:
 - Expenses to improve telework capabilities for public employees to enable compliance with COVID-19 health precautions
 - Expenses of providing paid sick and paid family and medical leave to public employees to enable compliance with COVID-19 public health precautions.

Planning and Delivering Local Emergency Response - Proposed Budget \$81,700

Responding to the March 2020 national emergency declaration by the President of the United States, as well as the State of Emergency and Public Health Emergency declarations issued by Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon, necessitated a unified response from local government agencies working in tandem with the business community. City leadership developed both internal and external responses to these emergency declarations and subsequent public health orders.

A. Planning and Implementing the Community Response

Members of City leadership participated in a community response team, led by Dr. Jean Elias, the Albany County Health Official, and included key stakeholders representing Albany County, Iverson Memorial Hospital, Albany County Emergency Management, Albany County School District, the University of Wyoming, the Laramie Chamber Business Alliance, and Laramie Main Street among others. The primary purpose of these meetings was to develop a consistent implementation plan for public health orders; conduct recovery planning and community; and to review local public health order variances/changes in Laramie. Another purpose was to ensure communication between these groups and the public, using local and social media sources. City staff members also advised and assisted Albany County Officials in developing communication plans related to business closures and reopening. The group was comprised of executive and leadership positions at the City who were charged with leading the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the Police Chief, Fire Chief, Public Safety Emergency Point Administrator, City Manager, City Attorney, Economic Development Administrator, and Public Works Director. Each of these positions has a significant role in providing or administering public health and safety services that require substantial modifications in response to the pandemic and, as such, payroll expenses are an allowable cost for CARES act funding. Reimbursements will be requested based on the specific time

worked for these response tasks, rather than an allocated amount. Variable rate benefits and taxes billed to the CRG award will include pension contributions paid by the City, worker's compensation, and FICA.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Type of Expense</u>	<u>Proposed Budget</u>
Community Meetings	Personnel	\$21,700

B. Developing and Implementing the Internal Response

Like all organizations, the City of Laramie needed to evaluate how to best adjust its service delivery methods in order to respond to the public health emergency. It initiated a Pandemic Response Team (PRT) in March 2020, comprised of City leadership, to evaluate actions necessary to keep members of the public and employees safe. This team is responsible for implementing both the Wyoming Department of Health's Orders and City Manager Janine Jordan's directives for City facility closure and social distancing practices. The group advises the City Manager on operational impacts of the pandemic and develops and implements action plans in response to these impacts. It also coordinates City activities with the Albany County Emergency Management office.

The group is comprised of executive and leadership positions at the City who were charged with leading the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the Police Chief, Fire Chief, City Manager, City Attorney, Chief Operating Officer, Assistant City Manager, Business Operations/Municipal Court Manager, IT Manager, Recreation Manager, HR Manager, Public Safety Emergency Point Administrator, and Facilities Manager. Each of these positions has a significant role in providing, supporting, or administering public health, safety, and judicial services that require substantial modifications in response to the pandemic and, as such, payroll expenses are an allowable cost for CARES act funding. Reimbursements will be requested based on the specific time worked for these response tasks, rather than an allocated amount. Variable rate benefits and taxes billed to the CRG award will include pension contributions paid by the City, worker's compensation, and FICA.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Type of Expense</u>	<u>Proposed Budget</u>
Pandemic Response Team	Personnel	\$60,000

Protecting the Health and Safety of City Employees & the Public - Proposed Budget \$164,400

City Manager Janine Jordan issued her first staff directive related to the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. This directive mandated social distancing requirements for workers, implemented additional sanitation procedures for employees working at City facilities, including frequent wipe downs of surfaces with disinfecting wipes, and required the use of personal protective equipment (facial coverings) and increased hand sanitizing. The City Manager's directive was based on guidelines from the Wyoming Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention designed to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus. To implement this directive protecting the health of safety of City employees, purchases for personal protective equipment (PPE) (e.g. masks, gloves, and items protecting janitorial staff) and additional sanitation supply items were necessary. More frequent cleaning by janitorial staff was also required. Additionally, to ensure social distancing, employees were assigned to full or partial telework, which required equipment and IT support to implement. Virtual meetings replaced in-person meetings as the primary method of communication between groups.

Ensuring public safety has included implementing facility closures mandated by the Wyoming Department of Health orders (recreation facilities), as well as creating and implementing additional closures (City facilities, parks) deemed necessary to limit the virus' potential spread. The City and the Albany County School District followed the recommendation of the National Recreation and Parks Association and the Albany County Public Health Officer and closed playgrounds to limit the spread of SARS-CoV-2. This action helped eliminate public exposure to commonly touched surfaces and ensured

that social distancing recommendations were implemented in playground and park facilities.

To protect both employees and members of the public, each City facility reopening, including playgrounds and parks, will include additional sanitation procedures and protective barriers when direct customer contact is necessary. To limit exposure on commonly used surfaces, bathrooms will be retrofitted with touchless installations for toilets, soap dispensers, and faucets. Additionally, hand sanitizer dispensers have been installed throughout facilities. Meetings and events require different setups to maintain social distancing, and unanticipated labor costs are required in order to reset spaces in between events.

Separate applications are being submitted for public safety, public works, and recreation operations. The proposed budget includes costs not accounted for in the City's other grant funding requests.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Type of Expense</u>	<u>Proposed Budget</u>
Implement Telework/Virtual Meetings	Personnel	\$7,500
	Supplies	\$13,250
Additional Sanitation/Cleaning/PPE	Personnel	\$60,000
	Supplies	\$14,100
Retrofitting Facilities, including Touchless Installations	Supplies	\$20,000
Additional Event and Meeting Setup/Tear Down	Personnel	\$27,000
Implement Parks Closures/Sanitation	Personnel	\$21,000
	Supplies	\$1,550

Personnel costs funded by this request include facilities maintenance (janitorial), parks, and IT staff who played a significant role in developing and implementing the pandemic response to ensure employee and public health and safety, including at City facilities with mandated closures. As such, the City deems the request for payroll expense reimbursement for direct pandemic mitigation as an allowable use of CARES act funding. Reimbursements will be requested based on the specific time worked for these response tasks, rather than an allocated amount. Variable rate benefits and taxes billed to the CRG award will include pension contributions paid by the City, worker's compensation, and FICA.

Implementing Necessary Policy and Practice Changes - Proposed Budget \$43,550

With the closure of public spaces and social distancing requirements of City directives designed to ensure employee safety, City leadership had to determine how it would deliver its core services safely. New procedures were necessary in the City Clerk, Municipal Court, and HR operations to accommodate closures and social distancing, as well as respond to new federal legislation requiring emergency FMLA leave. Costs incurred for paid emergency leave are part of the funding request, as is administrative leave paid to ensure social distancing when telework capabilities were not possible. Process changes in HR included a new hiring processing, using an assessment software and virtual platform to identify the best possible candidates for open positions.

Additionally, the City worked with the County to evaluate the need for additional sites for upcoming elections. The City pays a percentage of the election cost, as elections are administered by the County. Due to social distancing requirements, the County is planning on additional polling locations, which will increase the City's cost share for the election.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Type of Expense</u>	<u>Proposed Budget</u>
Design/Implement Revised Hiring Design new HR policies related to Testing/Safety/Emergency FMLA leave	Personnel	\$5,000
Implement paid Emergency FMLA Leave and COVID-19 Administrative Leave	Personnel	\$4,400
Setup and support Zoom arraignment Implement virtual modifications to public meetings	Personnel	\$15,000
Modify procedures used in liquor licensing, parking/special event permit management, and low income ordinance applicant renewal	Personnel	\$9,800
Municipal cost share for additional election expenses	Personnel	\$2,650
	Cost Sharing	\$3,600
		\$3,100

Personnel costs funded by this request include Municipal Court (public safety), Human Resources, and City Clerk's office staff who played a significant role in developing and implementing the pandemic response to ensure employee and public health and safety, including at City facilities with mandated closures. As such, the City deems the request for payroll expense reimbursement for direct pandemic mitigation as an allowable use of CARES act funding. Reimbursements will be requested based on the specific time worked for these response tasks, rather than an allocated amount. Variable rate benefits and taxes billed to the CRG award will include pension contributions paid by the City, worker's compensation, and FICA.

2. Describe how the funds being applied for are to cover costs for necessary expenditures incurred due to the public health emergency with respect to the COVID-19.

Coronavirus Relief Grant funding must be used for expenditures necessarily incurred in response to the public health emergency. The justifications supporting necessity are provided by section below.

Planning and Delivering Local Emergency Response

Both community meetings and pandemic response team meetings were conducted for the sole purpose of responding to the national, state, and local public health emergencies. There was no other business purpose for these meetings designed to ensure the public health and develop emergency response. The personnel expenditures incurred for these meetings were for communication and enforcement of state and local government public health orders and to plan for alternate City operations during the course of the emergency. Planning and managing emergency response are necessary to the functioning of a local government entity that delivers essential services. Staffing costs requested for reimbursement are directly attributable to the performance of pandemic response. Variable rate benefits and taxes billed to the CRG award will include pension contributions paid by the City, worker's compensation, and FICA.

Protecting the Health and Safety of City Employees & the Public***A. Implement Telework/Virtual Meetings***

The public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic mandated social distancing requirements that resulted in telework for City staff members and transition to virtual meetings. These expenditures were necessary to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus and protect employee safety. The City would not have incurred these costs were it not in emergency response. Staffing costs requested for reimbursement are directly attributable to the performance of pandemic response. Variable rate benefits and taxes billed to the CRG award will include pension contributions paid by the City, worker's compensation, and FICA.

B. Provide Additional Sanitation, Cleaning, and PPE

Additional sanitation products, PPE, and more frequent cleaning/sanitation services have been required in order to protect employees and the public from virus transmission based on both public health orders and recommendations. These additional costs are only due to the COVID-19 response and extend beyond the supplies and procedures used prior to the emergency response. Staffing costs requested for reimbursement are directly attributable to the performance of pandemic response. Variable rate benefits and taxes billed to the CRG award will include pension contributions paid by the City, worker's compensation, and FICA.

C. Retrofitting Facilities, including Touchless Installations

Prior to the pandemic, the City did not require touchless installations in bathrooms or protective barriers in customer service areas. The public health response required by the pandemic necessitates these installations in City facilities, in order to limit potential virus transmission in common areas with frequently touched surfaces.

D. Additional Event and Meeting Setup/Tear Down

The City has several multi-use rooms that require a specific setup based on the event. Due to additional social distancing requirements necessary to slow the novel coronavirus spread, additional setup and tear down will be required from facilities staff to properly set each event for distancing. These costs would not be incurred outside the context of pandemic response. Staffing costs requested for reimbursement are directly attributable to the performance of pandemic response. Variable rate benefits and taxes billed to the CRG award will include pension contributions paid by the City, worker's compensation, and FICA.

E. Implement Parks Closures/Sanitation

The City closed its park and playground facilities in order to help limit community spread of COVID-19, as previously described, eliminating public access to commonly touched surfaces and helping ensure social distancing requirements in these areas. Costs incurred include staffing and materials to implement and communicate closures. With the reopening, additional costs are now necessary in order to provide for increased distancing and sanitation procedures designed to reduce potential virus transmission in the community. Staffing costs requested for reimbursement are directly attributable to the performance of pandemic response. Variable rate benefits and taxes billed to the CRG award will include pension contributions paid by the City, worker's compensation, and FICA.

Implementing Necessary Policy and Practice Changes***A. Design/Implement Revised Hiring Process***

With social distancing requirements in place, the City had to implement revised hiring procedures to ensure qualified applicants in the absence of in-person interviews. This new process includes a pre-interview, online assessment for all candidates, a procedure not required when in-person interviews were possible. It also includes interviews delivered via Zoom. These practices are necessary as long as social distancing

requirements are in place. Staffing costs are directly attributable to the performance of pandemic response and include training hiring managers on the new process and implementing it. Variable rate benefits and taxes billed to the CRG award will include pension contributions paid by the City, worker's compensation, and FICA.

B. Design new HR policies related to Testing/Safety/Emergency FMLA leave

HR personnel were required to quickly research and develop new policies for employee testing and emergency FMLA leave. They also had to research best practices to ensure employee safety and recommend appropriate actions for the COVID-19 pandemic. These policies and practices were developed solely in emergency response to the pandemic. Staffing costs requested for reimbursement are directly attributable to the performance of pandemic response. Variable rate benefits and taxes billed to the CRG award will include pension contributions paid by the City, worker's compensation, and FICA.

C. Implement paid Emergency FMLA leave & COVID-19 Administrative Leave with Pay

The City has implemented two weeks of paid emergency FMLA leave in response to the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. This additional expense would not be incurred by the City outside the context of the mandated pandemic response. Additionally, it has implemented a type of administrative leave with pay specifically associated with COVID-19 response. This leave is used only when 1) telework arrangements cannot be fully implemented due to employer, rather than employee, limitations and 2) Directors and Chiefs quarantine staff members due to potential, rather than confirmed, COVID-19 exposure. Variable rate benefits and taxes billed to the CRG award will include pension contributions paid by the City, worker's compensation, and FICA.

D. Setup and support Zoom arraignments

The costs to setup and provide ongoing technical support to Zoom-delivered arraignments for Municipal Court were incurred because of the social distancing requirements necessary for pandemic response, as well as compliance with Wyoming Supreme Court orders, which have closed in-person Court proceedings until August 3, 2020. Arraignments are still necessary when the Municipal Court is closed to in-person activity; the Municipal Court staff worked with the Municipal Judge and City Attorney's Office to setup the new process. Currently, defendants can choose between a continuance and a Zoom bench trial. Holding these Court proceedings virtually has increased costs to the City. Staffing costs requested for reimbursement are directly attributable to the performance of pandemic response. Variable rate benefits and taxes billed to the CRG award will include pension contributions paid by the City, worker's compensation, and FICA.

E. Implement Virtual Modifications to Public Meetings

With the closure of facilities necessary to maintain social distancing and slow community spread of the coronavirus, public meetings were moved to a virtual platform. This practice will be continued as long as social distancing requirements are in place. Staffing costs requested for reimbursement are directly attributable to the performance of pandemic response. Variable rate benefits and taxes billed to the CRG award will include pension contributions paid by the City, worker's compensation, and FICA.

F. Modify procedures used in liquor licensing, parking/special event permit management, and low-income ordinance applicant renewal

Many of the City's procedures required in-person visits from community members in order to process. With the social distancing requirements of the pandemic response and facility closures, City staff had to develop revised online procedures for liquor licensing, permit management, and low-income program renewals. These revised procedures will be implemented as long as pandemic response continues. Staffing costs requested for reimbursement are directly attributable to the performance of pandemic response. Variable rate benefits and taxes billed to the CRG award will include pension contributions paid by the City, worker's compensation, and FICA.

F. Municipal cost share for additional election expenses

Based on community with the Albany County Clerk, the City will incur additional cost sharing expenses for 2020 elections. These expenses are necessary to provide a greater number of election sites to maintain social distancing and limit potential community spread of the novel coronavirus.