



NEWS RELEASE

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Township continues pursuit of equitable share of federal COVID-19 relief funds

THE WOODLANDS, TEXAS (June 25, 2021) – The Woodlands Township has retained a professional government relations consulting firm to assist in its pursuit of an equitable share of federal COVID-19 relief funds.

These funds, issued through two different Acts, have been made available by the federal government to assist local communities to recover from the economic downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We’re fighting on behalf of The Woodlands residents who pay in millions of dollars every year into the federal Treasury but have failed to see a return of those dollars due to our unique governance structure,” said Township Chairman Gordy Bunch.

The Woodlands Township has not received upwards of \$30,000,000 of federal funding from the America Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

“Right now, these dollars are going to cities throughout all of Texas,” he said. “As the primary entity that provides residential services like fire protection, enhanced public safety, trash/recycling management and covenant enforcements and more, we have missed out in this federal funding. We are doing everything possible to work within the parameters of being a Township to secure federal dollars sent to every city in Texas.”

Treasury is accepting public comment on the Interim Rule for the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds until July 16, 2021. The Township will engage Brownstein, Hyatt, Farber and Schreck to provide legal and government relations consulting services to represent the Township before the United States and Texas governments as Treasury works to finalize the Interim Rule. The Township will have access to the full complement of Brownstein, Hyatt, Farber and Schreck advisors including many with direct congressional and executive branch experience. Texas procurement rules do not allow for competitive bid for professional service contracts. However, the firm was selected after reviewing recommendations of staff, outside



counsel and professional advisors due to their technical expertise, ability to represent the Township before government entities and the availability of staff resources to provide a full scope of strategic services during the short federally imposed public comment deadline.

In 2020, the CARES Act authorized \$150 billion for local communities to respond to the impacts of COVID-19. The Township received less than \$1 million of the estimated \$6.8 million for which it qualified under the CARES Act. Earlier this year the President signed into law The American Rescue Plan Act that authorized \$350 billion in direct federal financial stimulus to local governments to respond to COVID-19 and address the economic impacts of federal and state mandated economic shutdowns. These Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds provide direct financial assistance to (1) support on-going COVID-19 response efforts, (2) replace lost revenues, (3) provide economic stabilization to families and businesses impacted by the pandemic and (4) address public health and other economic challenges that have highlighted the inequitable impact of the pandemic on certain communities.

On May 17, 2021, the Federal Register included notice from the United States Treasury of the Interim Final Rule and initial Guidance for implementation of the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund as authorized by ARPA. The Woodlands Township was not included in Treasury's funding allocation even though the Township appears to be eligible for funding.

The Township's peer communities (Allen, Frisco, Round Rock, Southlake and Sugar Land) are eligible for ARPA funding. The peer communities received an average of \$15 million or an average of \$109 per capita in Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery funds. These funds are in addition to an allocation of up to \$55 per capita in Coronavirus Relief Fund dollars from the CARES Act. In total, the Township's peer communities have received an approximate combined \$80 million in federal relief.

Public wishing to make comments to Treasury on Interim Final Rule for State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds may submit electronically through the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Written comments may be mailed to the Office of the Undersecretary for Domestic Finance, Department of the Treasury, 1500 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20220.