



Madison County Setting Stage for Spending \$51 million in Stimulus Funding

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EDWARDSVILLE — Madison County received the first installment in federal stimulus funding — \$25.5 million — and officials are looking at ideas on how to spend it.

Chairman Kurt Prenzler will soon be naming a blue-ribbon panel of community leaders to assist the process.

“The individuals on the panel will provide an outside voice as to how the county should prioritize its planned projects and make sure there is transparency and that guidelines are followed,” Prenzler said.

Prenzler said there are also several working groups, which includes county administration, elected officials and board members.

The American Rescue Plan Act places broad limits on how state and local governments can use the stimulus funds. On May 10, the U.S. Department of Treasury released guidance on how the local governments could spend the money.

“The county is prohibited from using these funds to lower taxes, pay for pensions or to finance general fund expenses,” Prenzler said.

He said the county could use the funding for infrastructure investments on water, sewer or broadband, as well as cover the expenses of first responders or provide premium pay for essential employees. The county will have until Dec. 31, 2024 to allocate the funds and complete the projects by Dec. 31, 2026.

Prenzler said the county would be hiring an outside consulting firm to manage the funding and make sure the county follows federal guidelines. The second installment is set to arrive in 2022.

“We have some good ideas on how to spend this money and we want to make sure we do it right,” he said.

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