



Gaston County CARE Plan In Detail

The following items have been identified as projects that are essential to Gaston County and will help stimulate economic growth.

Capital Funds would be used to begin the **immediate projects** in the current fiscal year (FY20). Immediate projects include ADA compliance updates to County facilities, County parking lot improvements, and construction of the Child Advocacy Center facility.

For the **long-term projects** identified, Gaston County could issue debt to finance the projects and provide an additional \$5 million in capital funds for design. Long-term projects include a facility to house GEMS, Emergency Management, and Telecommunications; and a new Fleet Maintenance facility.

Additionally, the **Family Advisory Board** and county programs targeting seven areas of key need would assist at-risk populations in Gaston County that are impacted the most from economic loss. Areas of assistance for these individuals have been identified below. However, these needs may change as the situation evolves. Several of the initiatives are existing programs that would be temporarily expanded or enhanced.

Immediate Projects

1. **ADA Compliance Updates – \$2.7 Million**

Several Gaston County facilities were built before ADA requirements were in place. In order to comply with these ADA requirements, the County formed a plan to complete all ADA upgrades within two years, a total cost of \$5.4 million. The County allocated half of this cost (\$2.7 million) in FY20 and planned to allocate the remaining \$2.7 million in FY21. This action will accelerate this project in order to infuse money into the economy during uncertain economic times.

2. **Parking Lot Improvement – \$2.0 Million**

Much like the ADA improvements, the County allocated approximately half of the funding for necessary parking lot improvements in FY20 and planned to allocate the remaining amount in FY21. This action will also move up the FY21 plan for parking lot improvements to FY20.

3. **Child Advocacy Center Facility – \$2.0 Million**

The CAC in Gaston County serves over 300 children annually that are victims of sexual abuse. Bethlehem Church (now City Church in Gastonia) made a significant donation of land to locate a new CAC. The new CAC will create a more home-like atmosphere as part of a best practice model for this type of facility. The preliminary design of the facility is complete and these funds will complete the final design and construction of the facility.

Long-Term Projects

1. **GEMS/Emergency Management/Telecommunications Facility – \$28.5 Million**

This facility relocation is included in the County's capital plan. This action directs staff to move up the planning and vetting process for the project in order to evaluate the fiscal viability. The current facility is inadequate in terms of space and functionality.

2. **Fleet Maintenance Facility – \$11.25 Million**

This facility relocation is included in the County's capital plan. This action directs staff to move up the planning and vetting process for the project in order to evaluate the fiscal viability. The current facility is inadequate in terms of space and functionality.

Infusion to Family Advisory Board - \$100,000

These are one-time funds to be allocated to the Family Advisory Board to help address the crisis. There will be criteria established around the allocation of funds as it pertains to the pandemic. Additionally, staff will continue to evaluate the structure and guidelines of this board in the future to ensure accountability and effectiveness.

County programs - \$1 Million

Each of these programs will specifically target citizens that have been negatively impacted as a result of the crisis. The County will use federal funds first to address the needs before utilizing county dollars. The existing programs will be greatly enhanced and mobilized to meet the needs of our citizens as the situation evolves.

1. Food Bank
2. Rental/Housing Assistance
3. Vehicle Payment/Repair Assistance
4. Daycare Supplements
5. Homebound Clients
6. Prescription Assistance for Individuals not Qualified for Medicaid
7. Community Assistance for Foster Children Age 18-21