



## **For Immediate Release**

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## **Tulsa County allocates \$4 million to OSU Medical Center expansion**

Tulsa County Commissioners approved a \$4 million allocation of American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding Monday to support infrastructure improvements for the Oklahoma State University Medical Center expansion, which includes a new veterans hospital and a psychiatric hospital.

“Tulsa County is proud to join many public and private partners, including The Anne and Henry Zarrow Foundation, to support this expansion and improve health outcomes for our nation’s veterans, as well as those in our community experiencing a mental health crisis,” said Tulsa County Commission Chairman Stan Sallee. “My fellow commissioners and I are working diligently to place ARP funding where it is needed most in our community. This proposed project lifts the standard of care for all Tulsans but specifically improves outcomes for our most at-risk Tulsa County residents.”

The \$4 million allocation is the largest ARP expenditure to date since Tulsa County received the first of two annual funding installments May 25. In total, Tulsa County will receive \$126.5 million through ARP in 2021 and 2022.

The OSU Medical Center expansion includes a new veterans hospital, which will be located in downtown Tulsa at 7th Street and Houston Avenue. The veterans hospital is the focus of a \$120 million Congressional appropriation. Tulsa County’s \$4 million allocation will go toward infrastructure for the overall expansion, which will support the veterans hospital, psychiatric hospital and additional services.

The OSU Medical Center expansion is possible through a unique partnership among County, City, State and Federal funders, as well as many private donors including The Anne and Henry Zarrow Foundation.

“This is Tulsa’s opportunity to grow a true university medical campus engine here,” said Judy Zarrow Kishner, president of The Anne and Henry Zarrow Foundation. “There is no question that Tulsa County needs additional mental health beds and expanded services, and the State has been committed to helping us get there over the next few years.”

Kishner said investments in mental health treatment and services reaches far beyond health and improve outcomes for a range of significant challenges in Tulsa County.

“The data shows us clearly that successful treatment of mental illness reduces homelessness, reduces arrests and increases new wages,” Kishner said. “So the return on investment that will come from better serving our veterans and raising the standard of care for those in mental health crisis is just more evidence that by doing the right thing, we can benefit the entire community.”

Jay Helm, chairman of the OSU Medical Center Trust, welcomed Tulsa County Commissioners to the partnership of local, state and federal governments that have made the expansion possible.

“This will be the largest development in downtown Tulsa since the Williams Center was built more than 40 years ago,” Helm said. “This will allow the OSU Medical Center to expand and train the physicians that Tulsa County and the state of Oklahoma will need in the future.”

Tulsa County established five priorities for ARP funding:

- Respond to COVID-19;
- Support economic recovery and development;
- Generate equity in underserved populations and communities;
- Build infrastructure, and
- Replace lost revenue.

To date, Tulsa County has approved \$14.2 million allocated to 13 projects.

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