



MEMORANDUM

Date: March 30, 2022

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: Jan Leshner 
Acting County Administrator

Re: **Special Audit of Pima County Use of Private Grant Money for Arizona 2020 Elections**

The Arizona Auditor General today released a special audit it conducted of private grant monies used for the 2020 elections by Pima County, Maricopa County, and the Arizona Secretary of State (. The report states that the Auditor General found nothing of concern relating to Pima County and its use of private grant money to support a safe and secure 2020 election. The full report can found at the Arizona Auditor General Website https://www.azauditor.gov/sites/default/files/22-301_Report.pdf.

Background

The Arizona State Legislature required the Auditor General to conduct the special audit pursuant to a law passed at the end of the 2021 session (Laws 2021, Ch. 408, §54). The law requires the Auditor General to report on private grant award dollars received and expended for 2020 elections. Regarding Pima County, this session law directs that:

On or before March 31, 2022, the auditor general shall submit a report to the governor, the president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives on . . . the following: . . . 3) Private, nongovernmental grant monies received and expended by Pima county on programs and processes for the 2020 elections, including the purpose of the expenditures, the amount spent for personnel and employee-related expenses and any balance remaining unexpended on June 30, 2021.

The only private, nongovernmental grant received by Pima County in relation to the 2020 elections was from the Center for Tech and Civic Life (CTCL). CTCL notified Pima County of this \$950,446 award by letter, dated October 20, 2020. The letter stated the overall purpose of the award as follows: "The grant funds must be used exclusively for the public purpose of planning and operationalizing safe and secure election administration in Pima County in 2020." The Pima County Board of Supervisors accepted and approved the grant at its public meeting on November 10, 2020. Notably, even though nine Arizona counties¹ also received CTCL grants for the exact same purpose, the Arizona State Legislature only targeted Maricopa and Pima counties in the 2021 session law requiring a special audit.

¹ Apache County, Coconino County, Graham County, La Paz County, Maricopa County, Navajo County, Pima County, Pinal County, and Yuma County.

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Two County departments – the Recorder’s Office and the Elections Department – fully expended the \$950,446 award by using \$941,408 for personnel costs and \$9,038 on early voting sites. The \$941,408 was specifically used for hazard pay since the COVID-19 pandemic was peaking and there were no vaccinations available at that time; additionally, there had been persistent threats of violence against local election workers. The balance of grant expenditures – \$9,038 – was used to cover supplies and services relating to early voting sites including \$8,933 for courier vehicle expenses (these couriers made a record number of trips to these sites due to historically high voter turnout).

The County is pleased to note that the special audit published today by the Auditor General reflects there are neither concerns nor findings relating to the County’s use of the CTCL grant award. Despite the successful outcome of this audit for Pima County, the County will be unable to pursue private grants in future to support future elections. During the 2021 session the Legislature also passed a law prohibiting “this state and a city, town, county, school district or other public body that conducts or administers elections” from receiving or expending private monies to prepare for, administer, or conduct an election, including registering voters (Laws 2021, Ch. 199, §1); this law is effective as of September 29, 2021.

JKL/mp

c: Jan Leshar, Chief Deputy County Administrator
Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator for Public Works
Francisco García, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator & Chief Medical Officer,
Health and Community Services