



PANDEMIC RECOVERY OFFICE

Aid to the Convention Center Final Report

Submitted by the State of Rhode Island Pandemic Recovery Office

Paul L. Dion, Ph.D., Director

Derek Gomes, Project Lead

Ross Lancaster, Data Analyst III

<https://pandemicrecovery.ri.gov>

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Aid to the Convention Center

Project Identification Number: 10018

Pandemic Recovery Office Approval Date: August 1, 2022

Project Completion Date: July 28, 2023

Funding Amount: \$10,000,000

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Problem Statement: In the last full fiscal year before the pandemic, the three venues operated by the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority (RICCA) – the Rhode Island Convention Center (RICC), Amica Mutual Pavilion (AMP), and Veterans Memorial Auditorium – generated \$140 million in estimated direct spending and attracted approximately 1.4 million people to the state. The operating margin that year was \$(661,000). These venues are in Providence. The pandemic forced the cancellation of all events, reducing RICCA’s operating margin to \$(4,890,000) in State Fiscal Year 2021.

Project Overview: The State provided RICCA with \$10 million of SFRF for operating support. RICCA is using these funds to tailor its operations for a post-pandemic environment to ensure the comfort and confidence of patrons. The funds are being used for the following purposes:

- \$5 million to upgrade technology at venues, particularly at the RICC, by expanding broadband capacity, improving Wi-Fi capabilities, and integrating cell service within the building. New technologies, such as a private network, can fold these services into one place, control revenue opportunities, and improve the patron experience and employee efficiency. This investment is primarily the equipment and hardware needed for these improvements.
- \$3.2 million to replace the seats in the north end of the AMP that will make it easier to reconfigure the space to accommodate different types of events. The project also will add seating capacity in the north end (approximately 400 additional seats for basketball games, concerts, and other events and approximately 36 seats for hockey games).
- \$0.8 million to upgrade the complex’s marquee and wayfinding signage.
- \$1.0 million in general operating support.

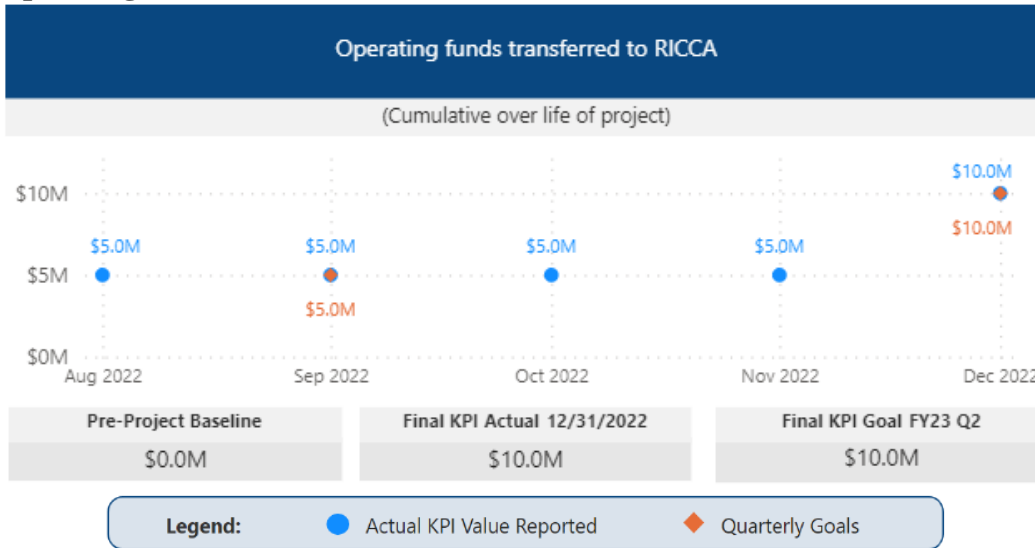
Financial Overview: All program payments can be found on the [Pandemic Recovery Office’s website](#) by filtering the “Project” box for “Aid to the Convention Center.” The table below shows planned expenditures by fiscal quarter and actual expenditures by fiscal quarter:

Fiscal Year Quarter	Planned Expenditures	Actual Expenditures
FY 2023 Q1	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000
FY 2023 Q2	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000
Total	\$10,000,000	\$10,000,000

Note: A single audit fee applies to all State Fiscal Recovery Fund projects and accounts for \$3,000 of the funds shown in the above table.

Key Performance Indicators: The following are the key performance indicators based on quarterly goals and monthly data collections.

1. Operating funds transferred



2. Operating margin



Operating Margin			
	Actual w/out Transfer	Actual w/ Transfer	Quarterly Goals
July 2022	\$(219,385)	\$(219,385)	
August 2022	\$(736,288)	\$4,262,212	\$4,153,872
September 2022	\$(923,884)	\$4,074,616	
October 2022	\$(648,697)	\$4,349,803	\$10,034,833
November 2022	\$(97,757)	\$4,900,743	
December 2022	\$356,486	\$10,353,486	
January 2023	\$556,930	\$10,553,930	\$10,256,026
February 2023	\$1,445,905	\$11,442,905	
March 2023	\$2,682,205	\$12,679,205	
April 2023	\$3,429,791	\$13,426,791	\$9,524,464
May 2023	\$3,778,585	\$13,775,585	
June 2023	\$4,320,436	\$14,317,436	
<i>Note: Transfers of \$4,998,500 were made in August 2022 and December 2022. A single audit fee applies to all State Fiscal Recovery Fund projects and accounts for the remainder of the funds.</i>			

As shown in the chart and table above, the actual operating margin for State Fiscal Year 2023 exceeded the project goal by approximately \$4.8 million. The higher margin is attributed, in part, to significant increases in events hosted and attendance. RICCA saw increases of 38% and 35% in the number of events held at the RICC and AMP, respectively, from State Fiscal Year 2022 to State Fiscal Year 2023.

Attendance increased 48% at the AMP, which attracted more than 500,000 patrons in State Fiscal Year 2023. Attendance at the RICC, however, remained relatively flat because of the absence of an event in 2023 that drew nearly 60,000 attendees in 2022. Excluding this one-time, extraordinary event, attendance increased 22% from State Fiscal Year 2022 to State Fiscal Year 2023.