BASIC NEEDS

RI Works: The budget includes $250K from the $96M TANF Block Grant to make two changes to the RI Works program: increasing the resource limit from $1,000 to $5,000 and increasing the monthly earned income disregard from $170/month to $300/month.

Department of Human Services (DHS) Providence Office Consolidation: In order to consolidate Providence DHS offices, including customer-facing spaces, the Governor’s budget calls upon DHS to issue a Request for Proposals seeking approximately 7,500 square feet of office space, with annual rent not to exceed $165,000 and with a ten-year lease costing $1.7 million.

Food and Nutrition:
- For the RI Community Food Bank, the budget includes an additional $100K in new general revenue to the currently allocated $350K, for $450K total.
- The funding to support the operations of the Meals on Wheels program is level-funded at $530K. The budget increases the allocation for Meals on Wheels by $165K in general revenue and $195K in federal Medicaid funds to increase the per meal rate paid for meals. Rates for standard meals would rise from $6.50 to $12.00 and from either $4.01 or $6.50 to $12.00 for frozen ones. Rates for culturally appropriate meals would be set at $14.05 and for therapeutic meals at $12.17. Rates would be annually adjusted for inflation.

HOUSING

The Governor’s proposed budget calls for using tens of millions of dollars in federal relief funds and general obligation bonds, along with some general revenue to expand affordable housing and to address other housing needs.

New Positions: The budget asks for $709K from general revenue to fund 5 additional positions at the Commerce Corporation’s Office of Housing and Community Development. These staff members will report to the recently-appointed Deputy Secretary of Commerce for Housing, a position authorized in the enacted FY2022 budget. These individuals would work on developing affordable housing, including the use of ARPA funds in this effort. The funds would provide for a project manager, a data and research analyst, a communications and stakeholder engagement professional, and two individuals focused on community and homelessness services development.

Bond Funds: The proposed capital budget uses $30M from the $65M in general obligation bonds approved by the voters in March 2021 to fund construction and redevelopment to provide affordable housing.

ARPA Funds: The FY2023 budget would make use of $81.5M in ARPA recovery funds to develop affordable housing and provide homelessness services, among other housing-related projects. See Appendix I for additional details of programs and spending proposals.