

The United States Conference of Mayors

The American Rescue Plan Act

Promoting Equity Through
ARPA Implementation

June 2022



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CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

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Introduction

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and its State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) represent an unprecedented response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its negative economic impacts. While this critical landmark legislation has been integral to the country's COVID-19 response, it has also served as a tremendous opportunity for cities to foster long-term economic growth, while promoting equity within underserved and underrepresented communities.

In 2020, the nation faced unemployment rates as high as 14%, with hundreds of thousands of businesses in peril, families in dire need, and local governments straining to respond to the health and economic impacts of the disease. Under the leadership of President Biden and Congress, the nation received the federal assistance needed to address the COVID-19 pandemic and its negative economic impacts through ARPA.

The SLFRF, a flagship provision of ARPA, has provided \$65.1 billion of much-needed direct fiscal assistance to cities to respond to this health and economic crisis. Eligible uses of these funds include: addressing a variety of pressing public health needs; responding to the short and long-term negative economic impacts of COVID; providing premium pay for first responders; filling budget gaps to ensure the delivery of local government services; and making investments in water and broadband infrastructure. In addition, the SLFRF enabled localities to dedicate ARPA funding to replace lost revenues, where localities faced significant revenue dislocations due to the pandemic.

The funds are being distributed by the United States Treasury in two equal tranches and must be obligated by December 30, 2024. This multi-year approach is designed to address a possible and likely scenario where COVID-19 continues to impact local governments and citizens over a prolonged period.

In a similar vein, the Biden Administration and Congress have anticipated that the negative economic impacts of COVID will extend over the course of several years. While incredible economic and job growth are a testament to ARPA's success, COVID-19 has also created several challenges that are manifesting across the nation, including rising inequities, strained supply chains, and significant inflation. These are challenges that are often beyond U.S. control, as other nations like China, for example, also face enormous challenges in maintaining global supply chains amid COVID shutdowns.

It is also clear that COVID will continue to have disproportionate health and economic impacts on low and moderate-income families and their neighborhoods. Additionally, both African American and Latino populations have seen higher infection and death rates from COVID. African American-owned businesses have been particularly hard-hit, with significant closures in communities across the country. Learning loss among students, who have already lagged in school performance, is particularly pronounced. Emotional and social development among youth has been stunted. Suicide rates among our nation's young people have risen dramatically. In addition, increases in violent crime have made neighborhoods dangerous and traumatized. Thus, our cities are witnessing the long-term consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, first-hand, and in real-time.

The overall impacts of COVID have also had a profound effect on the American psyche. This spring we witnessed the sobering milestone of 1 million American deaths from COVID-19. Families, friends, and colleagues have seen loved ones suffer and die, often alone and needlessly, because of disinformation about the disease. This subtle and traumatizing reality has impacted the nation's collective consciousness on a scale that we have not witnessed in generations, with unknowable future consequences. COVID-19 has torn at the fabric of our communities, and has infiltrated our national body politic.

And yet, the American people are resilient. Scientists have saved millions of lives with state-of-the-art vaccines. ARPA provided critical assistance to individuals, families, and businesses to help them in their greatest time of need. Our most important local institutions - our cities - received aid through the SLFRF to help restore vital public services and rebuild the economy, contributing to one of the strongest job markets in recent history.

About this publication

This publication, “Promoting Equity through ARPA Implementation,” illustrates how select cities are using their SLFRF to address the disproportionate impacts of the pandemic on low- and moderate-income people and communities of color with explicit attention to several core values:

- Leveraging federal aid to achieve equitable investment in underserved areas and to address systemic inequities;
- Integrating non-profits and the private sector meaningfully in the deployment of funds; and
- Pursuing the use of ARPA in tandem with a wider set of public finance, community investment, and social investment strategies, that further address economic disparities among underserved and underrepresented residents and enable transformative investments in equity to have sustained continuity.

In the section that follows, this report presents national best practices to drive equitable investment in communities using ARPA funds that emerged from a working group of cities we convened in 2022 to share strategies and best practices. Following that, the report presents case studies from cities across America that are deploying ARPA funds in alignment with those principles and the core values identified above.

National Principles of Equity to Guide ARPA Strategy

The case studies in this report highlight how cities are implementing strategies to respond to the negative economic impacts of COVID, while at the same time, investing in projects that will make lasting impacts far beyond the life of the ARPA SLFRF program.

Cities are promoting equity by launching several initiatives, such as: skills training programs and facilities; building children’s libraries in low-income communities; developing housing programs to stabilize neighborhoods and promote homeownership; removing abandoned and vacant properties that occasion blight in neighborhoods; providing behavioral health response services; expanding year-round and summer youth programs; piloting guaranteed income programs; shortening emergency response times; addressing violence; improving access to broadband; and many more initiatives. All the projects featured in this report use ARPA SLFRF funds in ways that will have lasting impacts and remove barriers to economic mobility, promote opportunity, and build assets for those who have historically been left behind.

To support leaders who want to realize the promise of equity via ARPA SLFRF investments, we present the following principles, derived from a range of city strategies:

Principle: A clear definition of equity, which is operationalized as both an outcome and a process, is a vital component of an ARPA strategy that seeks to address historic and systemic inequities for underserved populations.

- In the City of Boston an equitable recovery was defined as targeting services and resources to populations and neighborhoods that are disproportionately impacted and historically excluded communities. Additionally, the city actively monitored the demographic and geographic distribution of the funds to ensure that the city meets its stated equity goals. This definition and operationalization of equity was central to the equity framework that Boston leveraged in order to guide community engagement processes and allocations decisions to maximize the overall impact of its SLFRF allocation, as further described in the case study presented later in this report on page 6.
- The City of Chicago defines equity as both an outcome and a process by: (1) prioritizing access and opportunities for groups who have the greatest need; (2) methodically evaluating benefits and burdens produced by seemingly neutral systems and practices; and (3) engaging those most impacted by the problems that the city seeks to address as experts regarding their own experiences, utilizing them as strategists in co-creating solutions, and evaluators of success. As an outcome, Chicago’s definition of equity elevates the importance of results in achieving fair and just access to opportunity and resources that provide everyone the ability to thrive. This approach to equity by the City of Chicago acknowledges the present and historical inequalities that persist in society and elevates equity as a future state that the city strives to create where identity and social status no longer predetermine life outcomes. This multi-faceted approach was leveraged by Chicago in making

strategic decisions with respect to its SLFRF allocation, as further described in the case study presented later in this report on page 16.

Principle: Using a data-driven strategy to identify the underserved or historically marginalized populations, that can help to evaluate the benefits and burdens of ARPA funding allocations, is crucial for cities that seek to advance equity.

- The City of Fort Worth utilized historical municipal disparity data visualized in geo-spatial map layers as a core component of its ARPA allocations strategy. The city initially focused on geo-spatial clusters of racialized community groups, which were defined as Super Majority Minority Areas (SMMAs) and Majority Minority Areas (MMAs) and then proceeded to identify a more precise, targeted prioritization method that included race and other factors to create “Geographic Disparity Zones” (GDZs). GDZs, in Fort Worth, include multiple disparity indicators, most notably residual impacts of Fort Worth’s 1940 Redline Map, in conjunction with other equity indicators like English as a Second Language (ESL), proximity to healthcare facilities, access to affordable housing, rent burden, and access to capital and other financial networks. This data-driven strategy was leveraged by Fort Worth to make targeted ARPA allocations that are further described in the case study presented later in this report on page 28.
- The City of Kenosha used a data-driven strategy to assess and plan targeted investment needs in Qualified Census Tracts (QCTs).¹ Leaders in Kenosha were able to identify neighborhoods of greatest need located in the central part of the city, and direct planning and redevelopment efforts to focus around such areas. Using this strategy, the city prioritized areas for investment that included six neighborhoods surrounding the former AMC/Chrysler Plant Site (a 107-acre former manufacturing site in a QCT, surrounded by five other QCT’s) where 41% of its Hispanic and 45% of its African American population reside. Leaders in Kenosha worked continuously with community residents, educational institutions and community based nonprofit organizations to plan and implement several educational and economic development projects, ultimately allocating more than 70% ARPA SLFRF funds that the city received in its first tranche to such projects, as described in the case study presented later in this report on page 37.
- The City of Denver integrated equity as an embedded component of its program to track performance of ARPA funded projects. The case study presented on page 23 of this report describes how the city established a comprehensive logic model to assess outputs and outcomes generated by each program funded by ARPA.

Principle: Meaningful community engagement that brings underrepresented residents to the table and creates channels for the priorities they express to shape ARPA decision making, is critical to an inclusive equitable recovery strategy.

- The City of Greensboro developed its ARPA funding strategy with an equity-informed robust multi-channel community engagement process. Beginning in May of 2021, the city used a Budget Simulation tool to develop and ask residents to prioritize questions directly related to equity concerns, including the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on marginalized communities, investment in QCTs, affordable housing, and community programming. Residents provided clear feedback identifying areas of high priority, prompting the city to prioritize investments in equity and QCTs, described in the case study presented on page 31 of this report.
- Kansas City developed its ARPA SLFRF strategy with a community-led analysis on the impacts of the pandemic, in conversation with experts and community leaders to identify the key areas of need. The results of that community engagement process guided allocations of ARPA funds across departments, nonprofits, beneficiaries, local businesses, and provided all residents access to public health services. Leaders in Kansas City are also enabling community members to direct implementation of neighborhood-based projects through a \$13 million solicitation, called Rebuild KC, run by the city’s Department of Neighborhoods (which included ARPA SLFRF funding) as further described in the case study presented on page 33 of this report.

¹ A Qualified Census Tract is a designation by the Department of Housing and Urban Development in which 50% or more of the households are income eligible and the population of all census tracts that satisfy this criterion does not exceed 20% of the total population of the respective area.

Principle: Utilizing partnerships with nonprofits that serve communities most impacted by the pandemic, particularly communities of color, is important to address systemic inequities holistically.

- The City of Knoxville recognized that smaller grassroots organizations and nonprofits did not always qualify for traditional funding sources or federal aid at the scale provided by ARPA. Working with the United Way and other nonprofit partners, Knoxville created targeted funding channels and mechanisms for nonprofit organizations to build capacity and continue and expand their services. The case study presented on page 35 of this report further describes Knoxville's effort.
- The City of Fort Worth engaged small nonprofit organizations in focus groups to provide input on functional areas that include education, small business support, and first-time homeowner support. The city also hosted several one-on-one large nonprofit organization meetings between the North Texas Community Foundation, Rainwater Foundation, and CDFI Friendly America representatives. The case study presented on page 28 of this report further describes how Fort Worth engaged nonprofits and other stakeholders as meaningful partners in their ARPA strategy.

Principle: Integrating additional funding sources, alongside ARPA investments, is critical to ensure that transformative projects seeded with ARPA funds to enhance equity are sustained. This includes other intergovernmental funds, as well as philanthropic, social, and community investments.

- The City of Chicago's ARPA Recovery Plan leveraged SLFRF funds together with \$660 million of funds raised via the sale of general obligation bonds to invest in two key areas consistent with the SLFRF guidance: (1) significant investments in the well-being of people and communities to allow them to thrive and collectively improve community safety; and (2) strategic investments to create an equitable economic recovery for Chicago's neighborhoods and the communities hardest hit by the pandemic. The case study presented on page 16 of this report further describes this effort and explains how the City's plan also includes investments in ongoing essential City services to sustain Chicago's operations and pandemic response in the face of severe COVID-19-induced revenue declines.
- The City of Fontana pursued additional grants and discretionary spending from state and federal representatives to provide complementary funding sources for ARPA funded projects with targeted equity outcomes. The case study presented on page 26 of this report further describes this effort.
- The City of Kenosha is coupling ARPA SLFRF Funds with funding raised from Tax Increment Financing, Economic Development Administration Grants, State of Wisconsin Neighborhood Investment Grants and Workforce Innovation Grants, as further described in the case study presented on page 37 of this report.
- The City of Providence is combining ARPA with other federal and state funding sources while working with local philanthropies to continue or expand programs. For example, the city's direct cash assistance program is currently 100% philanthropically funded, as further described in the case study presented on page 51 of this report.

Principle: Addressing equity challenges with ARPA funds requires collaborative action with a cross-jurisdictional lens, particularly to address systemic inequities that require regional solutions at scale.

- The City of Canton is using ARPA funds to invest in learning loss with a cross-jurisdictional strategy. Recognizing that the pandemic significantly impacted how many high school students had fallen behind in their studies, the city worked with the Canton City School District and community partners to fund new summer programs for high school students who experienced difficulties with learning due to the pandemic. The case study presented on page 10 of this report further describes this effort.
- The City of Fontana is working with the State of California, San Bernardino County, the San Bernardino County Sheriff's department, and other regional cities to coordinate ARPA funding and program delivery efforts, recognizing that the challenges facing the city are neither locally caused nor locally solvable. The case study presented on page 26 of this report further describes this effort.

- The City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County coordinated the deployment of their respective ARPA SLFRF funds on the same projects, to address investment in equity and other areas, as further described in the case study presented on page 14 of this report.
- The City of Chapel Hill partnered with Orange County to help residents facing housing insecurity and devise strategies to support residents experiencing difficulties with the payment of utilities, as further described in the case study presented on page 12 of this report.

Principle: Cities that used ARPA funds for revenue replacement to enhance fiscal health can also take steps to strengthen the city's ability to make future sustained investments in core programs and services that are integral to advancing equity.

- The City of San Diego devoted the majority of its ARPA SLFRF funds to revenue replacement, which allowed the City to maintain employment of city workers and keep service levels for libraries, parks, recreation and other city services at their existing levels. Without such funding, the city would have faced municipal worker layoffs and service cuts, that would have disproportionately impacted disadvantaged communities throughout the city. The city's allocation has helped bring fiscal year 2022 and 2023 budgets into balance allowing the city to ensure that service levels across city departments are not reduced. In addition to strengthening the fiscal base, the city was able to make investments in youth programming, small business support, workforce development, and a city council microgrant program- all of which were focused on equitable investments in the most historically disadvantaged communities. The case study presented on page 54 of this report further describes this effort.
- The City of Mount Vernon used a portion of its ARPA SLFRF allocation to stabilize the city's fiscal base, and in tandem, also made investments to address long-standing sewer and wastewater infrastructure needs in historically black communities, upgraded sanitation equipment and operations, and made technology upgrades to close the digital divide in underserved areas where 35% of residents had minimal access to the internet. The case study presented on page 47 of this report further describes this effort.

From the examples above, and other case studies in this report, it is clear that ARPA SLFRF funds have been transformational in enabling cities to seed vital projects that respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and its negative effects. Such transformation is desperately needed as the nation learns to live with COVID and we shape a new future where no one is left behind.

City Case Studies: Promoting Equity Through ARPA Implementation

1. Boston, MA Mayor Michelle Wu

Total SLFRF Allocation: \$424,179,607

Equitable Approach to ARPA Implementation

For the City of Boston, an equitable recovery means proactively targeting services and resources to Boston's disproportionately impacted and historically excluded communities. The city is focused on ensuring that equity is actively embedded into every aspect of ARPA programs, from decision-making to data collection, to program design and implementation. Across all SLFRF-funded programs, Boston is also actively monitoring the demographic and geographic distribution of the funds to ensure that the city is meeting its stated equity goals.

The City of Boston put in place different mechanisms for incorporating equitable ideas and initiatives into SLFRF spending plans. For example, a Health Equity Task Force was constituted to develop a community-led roadmap focused on addressing the city's health and social inequities. In addition, detailed data collection informed the city's spending plans for the initial \$149.5 million allocation of ARPA/SLFRF funds.

The city is also relying on transformative community engagement plans to guide the use of remaining funds with the input of residents. Boston hosted 12 different community meetings on topics related to public health, wealth generation and jobs. It is also utilizing digital tools that include surveys, its 311 service, and prioritizing language access.

Bostonians across the city, from residents to elected officials, have articulated their needs and priorities through listening sessions, a citywide survey, and countless other communications. In addition, the Boston City Council is a key partner in the public process for ARPA implementation and has provided feedback on goals for specific districts as well as citywide objectives.

While emergency relief is still needed, Mayor Wu has committed to using SLFRF funds to make transformative investments to tackle some of Boston's largest systemic challenges.

Equity Framework

The City of Boston collected and incorporated feedback from community members and advocates from groups most impacted by the pandemic to create a series of equity-focused programs using ARPA funding. The data-driven, community-focused processes that Boston put in place to guide its distribution of ARPA funds has provided the foundation for an equitable response to the COVID pandemic and a more equitable city as a result.

In 2021, the Health Inequities Taskforce released its Health Equity Now Plan, which includes 13 recommendations that range from providing meaningful employment opportunities to providing quality housing to reimagining public health and safety. These recommendations, paired with the ARPA listening sessions and surveys, were used as a framework for allocating ARPA funds and future ARPA projects. The city has also been using an equity framework as a part of its annual budget process for multiple years and pre-existing experience with that tool was helpful in guiding ARPA strategy.

In addition to the Health Equity Now Plan, the city has a variety of relevant plans and documents that provided additional context for working on issues of health and economic equity across the city. These plans include Imagine Boston 2030 (the first city-wide planning document in over 60 years), Resilient Boston (an urban resiliency plan that is viewed through the lens of racial equity) and Go Boston 2030 (a long-term mobility plan that envisions a city where all residents have better and more equitable travel choices).

The City of Boston recognizes its responsibility in identifying and dismantling the root causes of structural inequity and will continue to build on pre-existing equity frameworks to make all ARPA spending decisions.

Equity-Focused Programs

- **Fare Free Bus Pilot:** On her first full day in office, Mayor Wu filed an appropriation request for \$8 million in ARPA funds to make the 23, 28, and 29 MBTA bus lines free for two years, expanding the groundbreaking pilot. This program eases financial burdens for residents and prioritizes rider equity as it focuses on three essential bus lines that run through many Boston neighborhoods including Mattapan, Roxbury, and Dorchester. Over half of riders on Routes 23, 28, and 29 are classified as low-income, according to MBTA's most recent system wide survey, and these bus routes run through neighborhoods that are also home to many minority-owned businesses. The Fare Free Bus Pilot program has already shown that free fares lessen riders' financial burden at a time when economic vulnerability is at a historic high, and ensures that residents can easily participate in Boston's reopening, recovery, and long-term renewal. This program provides a direct benefit to many of Boston's transit-critical residents, which the MBTA defines as "residents who are low-income, people of color, seniors, people with disabilities, or who live in households with few or no vehicles". In addition, the Fare Free Bus Pilot helps meet other city-wide goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and bringing people back into Boston's economy through the transit system.
- **Solarize Eastie:** The Solarize Eastie pilot program will enhance equity in Boston neighborhoods and provide cost-saving energy efficiency solutions to residents, small businesses, houses of worship, and local nonprofits in environmental justice communities. Solarize Eastie works to bring East Boston residents the opportunity to generate clean, renewable energy for their homes, reduce energy costs, and increase energy resilience. This program offers a variety of payment support, including a 15% discount below the average cost of solar PV installation, up-front subsidies for income-eligible building owners, and a no-cost option. More than half of East Boston's 45,000 residents are Latinx immigrants, and the neighborhood median income is \$52,935. Solarize Eastie will support low- and moderate-income residents to install solar improvements without any FICO score requirement or any upfront or ongoing payment obligation.
- **Mass Save Community First Partnership:** This effort will bring energy cost savings to residents and small businesses in East Boston, Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan and will enhance equity by providing cost-saving energy efficiency solutions to residents, small businesses, houses of worship, and local nonprofits in environmental justice communities. All four neighborhoods are considered environmental justice communities, historically experiencing disproportionately low Mass Save participation rates. With intentional and equitable outreach to these communities in the first year of the program — particularly for renters — the Community First Partnership will share energy efficiency opportunities with residents including no-cost energy assessments and no or low-cost energy saving products such as water-saving devices, programmable thermostats, as well as insulation and cooling equipment upgrades. This program, together with the Solarize Eastie program, will simultaneously work to reduce energy use and transition residents from utilizing fossil fuels to renewable energy, while delivering immediate benefits to residents in energy-burdened neighborhoods. These partnerships expand upon the Wu administration's commitment to energy democracy and becoming a Green New Deal city.

- **Digital Equity in Public Housing:** This program promotes equity by supporting internet access and digital literacy for Boston residents negatively impacted by the pandemic by expanding free public Wi-Fi in public housing, internet connectivity, and access to modern technology. According to an August 2020 survey by the Boston Housing Authority (BHA), one in three seniors and one in three Limited English Proficiency residents whose first language is Spanish do not have internet access at home. BHA's public internet initiatives, coupled with digital literacy efforts and purchase of equipment, brings digital equity to residents' doorstep, overcoming financial, technological, and educational barriers. BHA will support residents in accessing internet services in common spaces in their developments, as well as through distribution of devices and by enhancing access to digital literacy efforts. This program works to further expand digital connectivity needs in the city and increase equity by ensuring that all residents can access the internet.

Short & Long-Term Impacts

Mayor Wu is focused on securing a Green New Deal for Boston and utilizing ARPA SLFRF funds to make a down payment on this goal through a variety of investments including a fare-free bus pilot, food justice grants, and a youth green jobs program.

Neighborhoods across the city are already seeing the benefits of these programs. An initial analysis of ridership and service reliability data of the fare-free bus pilot program suggests that by enabling all-door boarding, fare-free service reduced dwell time – the amount of time the bus stopped to allow passengers to board – by more than 20 percent. In addition, the Food Sovereignty Grant program has already increased growing spaces for low-income families of color and helped residents grow ethnic vegetables that are difficult to locate in more mainstream markets. Boston's Youth Green Jobs Corps is also creating a roadmap for creating job opportunities for young adults while also protecting the city from the ravages of climate change and enhancing quality of life for all residents.

Additional Resources

Mayor Wu is taking an “all funds” approach to ARPA implementation to ensure an equitable allocation of resources across all neighborhoods and communities. As such, the city is leveraging its operating and capital budgets to jumpstart solutions to long-term challenges and advance ideas that address equity, climate, jobs, and health to lay the foundation for a Boston Green New Deal. ARPA funding, alongside new commitments in the operating and capital budgets, will expand upon and provide staffing support for current and future ARPA and SLFRF funded projects.

Nonprofit Engagement

Boston is lucky to be home to a strong nonprofit ecosystem, and the city understands that to equitably implement ARPA programs, it must partner with its nonprofit community. Nonprofits don't have to just serve as grantees but can be direct service providers and partners on many ARPA-funded projects. This means utilizing partnerships with nonprofits that are led by, and serve, communities of color to expand the reach of programs and connect populations most impacted by the pandemic with resources they deserve.

Many of Boston's current ARPA programs also support local nonprofits through grant distribution. Two recent examples include the Food Justice Community Grants and the Community Violence Intervention Program. The Food Justice Community Grants program utilized \$1.9 million in ARPA funding to create two different grant opportunities for local nonprofits to address the root causes of food insecurity with community-based solutions. The \$600,000 Community Violence Intervention Program supported the city's system-involved and proven-risk population by directing funding to Boston nonprofits to increase or scale up programs that improve economic, education and health outcomes for participants by providing training, case management, mental health services, and employment opportunities. In addition, based on feedback from the community, Mayor Wu has proposed a multi-year operating grant program for black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC)-led cultural organizations.

Testimonials:

“Funding support from the American Rescue Plan and the City of Boston enabled us to provide urgent financial assistance to avoid eviction, provide food and other essential needs for 1,950 immigrants who were not eligible for unemployment or multiple forms of federal aid. Forming the Collaborative and fundraising together leveraged funds received to maximize the impact on immigrant communities.” - City of Boston

“I want you to understand how truly grateful our families are for the financial relief funds. It has made them very happy and has given them some relief. This is amazing and we are so happy that you all have been such a blessing to our families. There are no words to explain how happy they are and we are. Thank you!” - Boston Public Schools, on ARPA funds that went to underserved families

Lessons Learned

Officials in Boston note that it is vital for an ARPA strategy to be built on a series of key values set by city leadership. In Boston, that included addressing urgent challenges, fiscal sustainability, transformative solutions, lasting legacies, racial equity, healthy recovery, good jobs, climate justice and ARPA eligibility. Those values helped Boston to establish a strategy to accelerate a Green New Deal for Boston, which will make a positive, tangible impact on residents’ lives for many years to come. In addition, Boston’s “all funds” approach meant that it worked hand in hand with the city’s budget office, which oversees the city’s capital and operating budgets, to ensure that impactful ideas that have not been funded through ARPA could find support through other means.

Funds From Other Sources

Boston has worked closely with additional funding partners to maximize the overall impact of its \$558 million SLFRF allocation. Additional funding partners have been working with the city on issues like housing, economic opportunity, inclusion, climate resilience, and others. The City of Boston recognizes that noted challenges cannot be solved by ARPA alone. For example, to tackle the inequities in vaccination rates within Boston, the city has invested in small, community-based organizations who can do culturally competent and equitable outreach and advocacy with hesitant populations. Many philanthropic partners have stepped up to support this work as well, granting funds to groups like Equity Now and Beyond and the Black Boston COVID-19 Coalition. Going forward, Boston looks forward to partnering with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, philanthropy, business leaders and additional advocates to move this work forward and continue it even beyond the 2026 SLFRF spending deadline.

Other Government Partners

The City of Boston has strong partnerships with additional municipalities, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, federal representatives, and is actively working to pair investments with funding from different jurisdictions.

For example, Senator Markey advocated for the inclusion of the Emergency Connectivity Fund within the American Rescue Plan to enable Boston Public Schools, the Boston Public Library, and Boston Housing Authority to distribute Wi-Fi hotspots, modems, routers, and internet-enabled devices, together with providing internet service, to students, staff, and patrons. The city built this digital equity investment by using ARPA SLFRF funds to grant \$1 million to the Boston Housing Authority to expand free public Wi-Fi in public housing and supporting digital literacy, internet connectivity and access to modern technology. In addition, the Department of Innovation and Technology received \$1 million in ARPA/SLFRF funds to increase digital access to city services by investing both in networking infrastructure and internet access in city-owned buildings.

The city is also working closely with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to pair ARPA SLFRF funds with state investments. In 2021, the City of Boston allocated \$5M in ARPA SLFRF funds to create additional low-threshold spaces and services for residents suffering from substance use disorder in targeted areas hit hardest by the opioid epidemic. The city advocated for and secured \$6.5M in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts ARPA bill to ensure that the state also directed additional resources to these low-threshold spaces.

2. Canton, OH Mayor Thomas Bernabei

Total SLFRF Allocation: \$63,613,221

Equitable Approach to ARPA Implementation

The City of Canton has a large underserved population. Many areas in the city have higher crime rates and have a high number of economically challenged citizens. In addition, the City of Canton Schools faced a significant challenge during the pandemic to educate its students who had limited computer connection capabilities and who had challenges completing school assignments in their home environment. Many high school students had fallen behind in their studies, and it was affecting their ability to graduate. To address the noted challenges, the City of Canton, the Canton City School District and multiple community partners developed a summer program that provided credit recovery for high school students who experienced difficulties with learning due to the pandemic, bussing, and a daily lunch. One of the highlights of this program is that students got paid for the three hours that they attended class, which motivated many of them to enter the program.

In addition, every day after attending school and having lunch, the City of Canton Schools would bus the students to summer work experiences in the afternoon for an additional three hours of paid time. On Fridays, students would either report to their work assignments or gather downtown to help clean up the downtown areas of the city. This allowed the students to develop pride in their city. Many commented that after participating in the cleanup days they really thought twice about littering.

The program proved to be highly successful as most students who completed the program were able to gain back lost school credits. This program also provided healthy lunches to children that might not get healthy lunch options in their homes. Finally, students were able to earn money from attending this program which helps each of their families. The city, the City School district and its partners are proud of this program and the many accomplishments that students were able to achieve. Accordingly, the city's plan is to continue offering this program for the next several years so that children can "Learn and Earn" during the summer months.

Equity-Focused Programs

- Housing Assistance Program working with Malone University: The city partnered with Malone University to assist students that were negatively affected by the pandemic. This program helped economically challenged students seek appropriate housing accommodations while they attended college.
- Partnership with Stark County Minority Business Association: This program provides programming to minority businesses to address the economic fallout due to the pandemic. This program provides minority businesses with business counseling, mentorship, and assistance with obtaining state certifications. Additionally, the program provides entrepreneurial training to minority youth.

Short & Long-Term Impacts

The Summer School/Work program that allowed students to earn lost credits is expected to produce long-term benefits for Canton's youth and, in the short-term, provided financial help to their families. The plan is to continue these types of programs for the next several years so that Canton reaches several distressed students and families.

Additional Resources

The City of Canton has partnered with several community organizations, including but not limited to the Canton City Schools, the Stark County Community Action Agency, Simply Youth, Economic and Community Development Institute, Stark County Minority Business, En-Rich-Ment, and several other local organizations.

Most of the projects that Canton has developed in partnership with community organizations have included opportunities for youth in the community. The city feels strongly that if you "prop-up" the younger adults, it will help them tremendously in the future. Canton is also dedicated to helping its struggling business community and has offered small business grant programs, business assistance programs, and others.

Engagement with Nonprofits

The City of Canton has partnered with many local nonprofit organizations. These include: TomTod Ideas, First Tee Canton, Simply Youth, Tiqvah Hands of Hope, The Tyler Lancaster Institute, and others. The city has partnered with these organizations to assist over 1,000 students and families in the city.

Lessons Learned

Officials at the City of Canton have learned that it is always important to keep an open mind and be willing to listen to anyone who has an idea for a program, in order to help as many residents as possible.

3. Chapel Hill, NC Mayor Pam Hemminger

Total SLFRF Allocation: \$10,668,497

Equitable Approach to ARPA Implementation

The City of Chapel Hill has a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Officer who helps the city with strategies, and engages in outreach to community groups in the city, and is supporting ARPA implementation efforts. To support the dissemination of information to diverse audiences, the City of Chapel Hill translated information into many languages and distributed it through a variety of channels - including flyers in public housing and different neighborhoods. The city also leveraged a very diverse City Council and a dedicated staff to help it reach and engage with underserved and underrepresented communities.

Equity Framework

The City of Chapel Hill is working on an equity framework in conjunction with Orange County. Although its equity framework is not fully formed, Chapel Hill has always tried to work through an equity lens when making decisions.

Equity-Focused Programs

- **Revive Program:** Chapel Hill developed a program called Revive, which gave out business loans to small businesses affected by COVID-19. The city had a special category for minority and women-owned businesses and reached out to all the businesses that it was aware of, with assistance from its Chamber of Commerce.
- **Food Bank:** The city has continued to administer a food bank distribution, every Wednesday, to assist residents and families impacted by COVID-19. This has been very popular, and the city has been able to connect with many in the community, discover additional needs, and distribute informational flyers in a variety of different languages.
- **Neighborhood Support Circles:** Chapel Hill is most proud of its Neighborhood Support Circles that it has set up to help children with remote learning. The city has provided technology when needed and paid a resident to supervise the children in their own neighborhood. It has also provided support when needed, so that parents can go to work and know that their children are safe while they are learning. This has been a very successful program and resulted in positive experiences for residents, particularly within the city's refugee community.

Short & Long-Term Impacts

Chapel Hill has focused on the shorter-term expenditure of its SLFRF allocation, which will yield positive long-term impacts. For example, the city spent money on helping residents stay in their homes, pay utilities and other assistance. The city kept people safe and informed in many languages with its outreach programs. Additionally, the city engaged many community leaders to help it distribute information and assess needs and plans.

The city also created an expanded sidewalk program downtown to help its struggling businesses stay open. This included more "grab & go spots", more outside dining rooms, as well as art installations along walkways. This program has been so popular that the city is making it permanent, as Chapel Hill businesses, and the community, have greatly enjoyed the benefits of these efforts.

The city has worked hard to install additional bikeways that are safer and connect neighborhoods to places of work, school and to transit. The city has moved quickly on these projects, with the aim of achieving long-term benefits within the community, while simultaneously contributing to the implementation of the city's Climate Action Plan.

Additional Resources

Chapel Hill dedicated part of its ARPA funds to community partners that are helping those most impacted by COVID-19 by building on its existing model of working with nonprofits to help the community. For example, the city used its connections and partnerships to reach out to all residents in the community, in a variety of different languages. In addition, the city's DEI Officer also assisted engagement efforts by identifying more meaningful ways to engage with residents.

Nonprofit Engagement

The City of Chapel Hill worked with food bank groups to coordinate efforts to feed children and families impacted by COVID-19. The city also worked with its Interfaith Council to help those in need of funds for utilities, rent, and other needs. Additionally, the city provided gift cards at food bank distribution centers. By working with the nonprofit community, the city was able to reach more people and help those who most needed support.

Lessons Learned

Officials in Chapel Hill learned that it is vital to make outreach to State Mayor's Organizations and identify another city whose projects resonate with your values.

Funds from Other Sources

The city had an excess fund balance to help develop transformational programs using ARPA funds. In addition, individual benefactors made donations to the city's rental assistance fund. The city also partnered with Orange County to keep individuals in their homes and support them in the payment of utilities.

4. Charlotte, NC Mayor Vi Lyles

Total SLFRF Allocation: \$141,618,325

Equitable Approach to ARPA Implementation

By design, ARPA's eligible uses of funds focus on the public health and economic needs of those impacted, and sometimes disproportionately impacted, by the pandemic. The City of Charlotte is relying on an informal equity lens, as opposed to a formal equity framework, to help ensure that ARPA-related investments are focused on underserved and underrepresented communities. Specifically, the city's ARPA-related investments in digital inclusion, small business support, workforce training, and food insecurity will all be focused on individuals, households, or small businesses that are disadvantaged or underserved. For example, digital inclusion investments will focus on internet access, device access and digital literacy for members of the community that are currently adversely impacted by the digital divide. The implications of which were intensified due to the pandemic and the role that digital tools play in job searches, training, healthcare, banking, and other important areas.

Equity Framework

The City of Charlotte has incorporated equity principles into various initiatives, and equity is a value that is embedded in its strategies and resource allocation. However, the city did not rely on a formal equity framework for purposes of making ARPA funding decisions.

Equity-Focused Programs

- **Digital Inclusion:** There are over 50,000 households in the city that lack a computer or tablet device. There are over 60,000 households that lack a broadband internet subscription. Based on Census data, the city knows that a disproportionate percentage of these households are in low-income areas. Such households are at a severe disadvantage, given how heavily society relies on technology (particularly during the pandemic) regarding job searches, work, education, healthcare, and banking. Charlotte is devoting \$10 million of ARPA funds to advance digital inclusion efforts in these communities, by increasing access to devices and broadband service, and through digital literacy training/support to enable households to better leverage these technologies. For example, through this funding Charlotte expects to expand broadband internet access to over 9,000 additional households.
- **Food Insecurity:** Charlotte, like most urban areas, lacks sufficient full-service grocery stores in high poverty areas. This limits access to fresh and healthy fruit, vegetables, and meat products. Charlotte is devoting \$1.5 million of ARPA funds to advance a Local Foods Production and Distribution Facility project in an underserved area on the west side of the city. Fewer than 1% of the residents in this area are located within 1/2 mile of a full-service grocery store. This is a relatively low-income area, with relatively low health metrics as well. Access to affordable, fresh, and nutritious food is essential to this community. One aspect of this project is a retail store that will provide fresh meat, dairy and produce. The project organizers are also taking steps to ensure that items sold at the retail store are affordable for the local community. Further, this project will provide employment opportunities for members of the local community - approximately 18 jobs at first, growing to 70 over time.

Short & Long-Term Impacts

The City of Charlotte's ARPA SLFRF-funded projects are intended to support household strength and resiliency, in response to the public health and economic impacts of the pandemic.

Additional Resources

Early during the pandemic, the City of Charlotte established a Community Recovery Task Force, including external stakeholders, to identify the greatest needs (focused on housing and small businesses) and potential responses that could leverage federal stimulus funds.

Nonprofit Engagement

The City of Charlotte has worked very closely with nonprofit organizations as partners in ARPA SLFRF implementation efforts. For example, the Center for Digital Equity, housed at Queens University, is an implementation partner for digital inclusion investments. Additionally, the Carolina Farm Trust is an implementation partner for the city's food insecurity project on the west side.

Lessons Learned

Officials in the City of Charlotte learned that it is important to rely on public input to assess the greatest community needs. In addition, it is vital to rely on nonprofit partners to help with administration and implementation efforts. It is also important to balance short-term and long-term needs in ARPA decision-making.

Funds from Other Sources

Many of the projects that Charlotte is pursuing, including digital inclusion, are being advanced via public-private sector funding coalitions.

Other Government Partners

In certain cases, the City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County have coordinated the deployment of its respective ARPA SLFRF funds on the same projects.

5. Chicago, IL Mayor Lori Lightfoot

Total SLFRF Allocation: \$1,886,591,388

Equitable Approach to ARPA Implementation

The Chicago Recovery Plan is the city's plan to amplify once-in-a-generation federal funding to create an equity-based investment strategy to catalyze a sustainable economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The initiatives and strategic priorities that make up the Chicago Recovery Plan were a result of several stages of community engagement and input during the 2022 budget development process, leading to a focus on two themes: Thriving & Safe Communities, and an Equitable Economic Recovery.

The funding in Chicago Recovery Plan, which includes funding from the ARPA and local municipal bond funds, is being allocated alongside all other available resources in the city budget to maximize this opportunity over the next 3-to-5-year funding period. The Chicago Recovery Plan leverages SLFRF, as well as \$660 million in City of Chicago general obligation bond proceeds, to invest in two key areas consistent with the SLFRF guidance: (i) significant investments in the well-being of people and communities to allow them to thrive and collectively improve community safety, and (ii) strategic investments to create an equitable economic recovery for Chicago's neighborhoods and the communities hardest hit by the pandemic.

The investments described in the Chicago Recovery Plan lay the foundation for this long-term growth and investment while meeting key needs of the city—providing direct relief for families, businesses, and neighborhoods in urgent need of assistance because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The city has proposed these investments to support an equitable recovery based on a whole-of-government response to community safety, urgent assistance to families in need, access to reliable city services, and a wide set of new economic opportunities.

Equity Framework

Under the leadership of Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot, the City of Chicago established an Office of Equity & Racial Justice (“OERJ”) in 2019 and hired its first Chief Equity Officer. In doing so, Chicago became the largest jurisdiction to both name a Chief Equity Officer and to explicitly identify racial justice as a key focus area of the Mayor's Office.

The Mission Statement of the OERJ is as follows: The Office of Equity and Racial Justice (OERJ) seeks to advance institutional change that results in an equitable transformation of how we do business across the City of Chicago enterprise. This includes the city's service delivery, resource distribution, policy creation, and decision-making.

The City of Chicago defines equity as both an outcome and a process. As an outcome, equity results in fair and just access to opportunity and resources that provide everyone the ability to thrive. Acknowledging the present and historical inequality that persist in society, equity is a future state that the city strives to create where identity and social status no longer predestine life outcomes. As a process, equity requires a new way of doing business: one that: (1) prioritizes access and opportunities for groups who have the greatest need; (2) methodically evaluates benefits and burdens produced by seemingly neutral systems and practices; and (3) engages those most impacted by the problems the city seeks to address as experts in their own experiences, strategists in co-creating solutions, and evaluators of success.

The City of Chicago's use of SLFRF funds incorporated the OERJ's framework and existing methodology, as well as new metrics developed for the purpose of an equitable economic recovery from the pandemic.

Equity-Focused Programs

- **Guaranteed Basic Income Pilot:** Using SLFRF funding, the City of Chicago has authorized a \$31.5 million monthly cash assistance pilot, called the Chicago Resilient Communities Pilot. In this pilot, 5,000 households will receive cash assistance of \$500 per month for twelve months – the largest guaranteed income pilot in the nation based on households served. The pilot, on track to launch in late spring of 2022, is designed to reach low-income Chicagoans who have been hard-hit by COVID-19, with a particular focus on reaching parents of minors, caregivers of older adults or people with disabilities, and residents not participating in other safety net benefits. By providing recurring cash relief for a sustained period, the city aims to demonstrate the effectiveness of cash assistance in improving residents' financial stability, health, and wellbeing, and to transform the portfolio of human services with a flexible and efficient program that creates choices, instead of imposing restrictions, for recipients. The city will partner with an independent evaluator, which will generate valuable evidence to policymakers across local, state, and federal levels.

- **Youth Employment Opportunities:** Over the next 3 years, Mayor Lightfoot will invest an additional \$2.8 million in ARPA funding per year to expand One Summer Chicago, the city’s largest youth employment program. This expansion will provide six-week paid experiences for an additional 1200 youth per year beginning in July. In addition, the city will invest \$29 million in ARPA funding over three years to extend its Chicago Youth Service Corps, a paid-service learning experience for youth ages 16-24, from a six-week program to a 40-week program. Youth participants will earn money in a diverse service corps while also building transferable leadership skills for workforce development and 21st century skill-building. This model aspires to promote safe and vibrant communities by empowering youth through civic-minded service while dually providing employment. The program will aim to serve 880 youth per year, emphasizing youth in black and brown communities hardest hit by COVID-19 and the underlying economic conditions exacerbated by the pandemic.
- **Maternal health:** Since 2019, The City of Chicago’s Department of Public Health (CDPH) has been piloting a universal perinatal support system that includes postpartum nurse home visiting: Family Connects Chicago. The city is scaling this program citywide by leveraging \$25 million of ARPA funding with the aim of eventually offering this support to all 32,000 families welcoming newborns in Chicago each year. CDPH provides funding, staff, oversight, and coordination of a system of multiple partners including birthing hospitals, an array of health and social service providers, and people with lived experience. The pilot currently consists of 4 hospitals -- Mt. Sinai, Rush University Medical Center, UChicago Medicine and Humboldt Park Health -- chosen for health disparities their patients face, the diversity of the populations they serve, management buy-in and ability of local service providers to receive referrals. Together, these hospitals serve 5,400 families a year. CDPH plans to use \$25M in the city’s allocation of ARPA funding to scale up its program over three years to all 16 of Chicago’s birthing hospitals. Some of the funding will support new CDPH staff to support onboarding new hospitals, administration, community and hospital engagement, as well as data analysis. The bulk of the funding will go to hospitals to staff and implement the home visiting component for their patients and to community- based organizations to expand the regional community alignment boards. Additional investments will be made in data systems integration, program evaluation, and grants to enhance community services to meet the needs of families.

Short & Long-Term Impacts

The City of Chicago will achieve many short and long-term positive impacts resulting from its ARPA funded projects. For example, The city’s initiatives in Thriving & Safe Communities will focus on providing (i) urgent financial support to families, (ii) access to summer and after-school programs for youth, (iii) public health services including mental health, maternal health, and access to healthy food, (iv) increased access to educational opportunities for low-income youth and families, (v) violence reduction strategies and support for victims of violence, and (vi) housing support for those at-risk of homelessness. Investments in these areas seek to address the root causes of community violence to create safer communities and allow families to thrive. Communities will receive support in the form of long-lasting investments through workforce support, place-based development, improvements to the city’s infrastructure and ability to deliver services to residents, and funding for arts and culture to drive economic growth and build wealth in historically underserved areas. Chicago’s arts and cultural institutions benefit all Chicago’s communities and represent a key area of recovery investments as well.

Lastly, the city has allocated funds for the essential city services that have proven vital during the pandemic and provided emergency services and relief to thousands of Chicago families as the worst of the pandemic-related shutdowns and economic fallout hit Chicago. These funds have been used to cover costs for city departments and programs for the provision of essential government services, putting the city on a more solid fiscal footing as it entered 2022.

Additional Resources

The City of Chicago works both as a provider of direct support and relief services, as well as a funder of delegate agencies to administer social services and community programs. In anticipation of these partnerships, the Lightfoot administration hosted a “Chicago Recovery Plan Readiness Summit” to ensure smaller community-based organizations understood the federal requirements of ARPA and administrative requirements to partner with the City of Chicago, which had over 1,000 attendees. Opportunities to partner with Chicago on its Chicago Recovery Plan-funded programs open on a rolling basis and are published on the internet.

Nonprofit Engagement

The philanthropic sector has been supportive of the Chicago Recovery Plan, particularly when it comes to outreach and advocacy on behalf of ARPA-funded programs, as well as program evaluation support. In addition, pro bono consultant organizations have supported the City of Chicago in its investment planning and eligibility due diligence.

Testimonial

“We commend the Mayor’s commitment to bring equity to neighborhoods in need. This budget will provide a lifeline for many Chicagoans, with significant investments across critical issues such as family cash assistance, affordable housing and essential community businesses.” - Raul Raymundo, CEO of The Resurrection Project

Lessons Learned

When the federal SLFRF guidance encouraged the use of existing evidence in the creation of SLFRF-funded programming, officials in the City of Chicago relied on several external sources to support that function. In addition to community engagement processes to understand hyperlocal needs, the city also surveyed policy experts and recent programming models that emphasized equity in its theory of change and impact statement. A full list of Chicago’s use of evidence across its Chicago Recovery Plan investments is available on the internet.

Funds From Other Sources

The Chicago Recovery Plan leverages SLFRF funds, as well as \$660 million in new City of Chicago general obligation bond proceeds, to invest in two key areas consistent with the SLFRF guidance: (i) significant investments in the well-being of people and communities to allow them to thrive and collectively improve community safety; and (ii) strategic investments to create an equitable economic recovery for Chicago’s neighborhoods and the communities hardest hit by the pandemic. The city’s plan also includes investments in ongoing essential city services to sustain Chicago’s operations and pandemic response in the face of severe COVID-19-induced revenue declines.

In addition, the Chicago Recovery Plan provides opportunities to leverage both existing public sector funding and private capital, particularly when funding community development opportunities on the South and West sides of the city. Prior to receipt of the ARPA SLFRF funds, the Mayor’s signature program Invest South/West collected a total of \$1.4B in total commitments to public and private investment. The Chicago Recovery Plan continues to capitalize on those partnerships to maximize the impact of its ongoing investments.

Other Government Partners

The City of Chicago has been in frequent coordination meetings with both Cook County and State of Illinois, particularly around the crisis of gun violence in the city. Among these three bodies, Chicago has continued to coordinate both policy and funding opportunities to ensure that it continues to resource and support key local organizations that are best prepared to conduct street outreach and programming to combat gun violence.

6. College Park, MD Mayor Patrick Wojahn

Total SLFRF Allocation: \$21,972,843

Equitable Approach to ARPA Implementation

The City of College Park deployed Census Mapping and Data as part of its core methodology for assisting underserved and underrepresented communities, as part of its ARPA implementation process. Although the University of Maryland is a major employer and students are College Park residents, the College Park Census tract exhibits that approximately 52% of its residents are in a qualified income eligible area. Furthermore, College Park Businesses are heavily concentrated on and around the U.S. Route One corridor, which also falls within the qualified tract area.

Strategically, the city's ARPA program for Individuals and families was structured to assist COVID-19 related impacts by issuing rental and mortgage assistance, medical financial-aid, and financial delinquencies. The city's program also successfully targeted the small business community by providing over \$1 million dollars in grants, which included up to \$25,000 to local entrepreneurs who employ about 40% of College Park's workforce. These community grants are being leveraged by small business owners for payroll expenses, lease agreements, and maintaining websites for ecommerce purposes.

The city's equity strategy for women and minority-owned firms has been particularly impactful. Thus far, grant awards for women owned firms have been made to 61% of minority owned firms. The city's approach to equity also reflects legislative action taken by its City Council to aggressively address racial inequities, restorative justice, and commemorate Juneteenth Independence Day. These initiatives have placed the City of College Park at the forefront of seeking opportunities and recognition of underserved and underrepresented citizens.

Equity Framework

The City of College Park has a long-established policy of nondiscrimination, which prohibits discrimination based on race, religion, sex, age, ethnicity, ancestry, national origin physical or mental disability sexual orientation gender identity, genetic information, or political affiliation. Recently, the City Council passed three separate resolutions to support equal participation. Along with its Strategic Goal Plan, the city has a successful framework for making ARPA funding decisions.

Equity-Focused Programs

- ARPA Grant to Choice Clinical Services: Choice Clinical Services provides Mental Health Counseling, Family Therapy, Relationship Counseling, Medication Management, and Specialized Services. Choice is successful at providing clients with a counselor of choice. The African American clientele count is reasonably high at Choice. Also, women account for nearly 60% of patients seeking help. Choice Clinicals' two College Park locations provided over 14,000 counseling sessions in 2021. The city's underrepresented and underserved residents were helped by a staff that continued to see clients during COVID-19 restrictions. The program promotes equity by helping citizens obtain first class healthcare. The city anticipates continuing to provide assistance via this program by partnering with clinical providers.
- Helpers to Good Program: Helpers to Good is a nonprofit food bank for meal delivery service. Meals are delivered daily to College Parks' two Senior Living Apartment complexes (Attick and Spellman Towers). The city's Senior population is nearly 8% of its overall population. By spending less on food and having more discretionary income, the City of College Park is promoting equity in among Seniors via this ARPA funded program.

Short & Long-Term Impacts

The City of College Park has helped its residents remain in their homes, while providing utility and food assistance with its ARPA Funds. To further support neighborhood stabilization, the city has also helped current homeowners who are in danger of foreclosure. It has provided 40 small businesses and 8 nonprofit entities with ARPA SLFRF assistance, to provide relief and long-term stability to College Park's economy.

Additional Resources

Emergency response times are a top priority for the City of College Park and its residents. Accordingly, the city partnered with three volunteer fire departments to address public safety and emergency responsiveness. Funding was leveraged to assist with staffing and equipment needs of emergency responders.

Nonprofit Engagement

The non-profit organization Meals on Wheels delivered food to College Park residents throughout the pandemic. The city allocated ARPA funds to help Meals on Wheels with staffing, rent, and supplies. This allowed for meal delivery services to remain uninterrupted during the pandemic.

Testimonial

“Choice Clinical Services would like to send a huge “Thank You” to the entire ARPA Grant Review Team and to the City of College Park. Choice Clinical Services was generously awarded a \$25,000 grant to help support our wonderful hardworking clinicians. Our staff has been exponentially challenged by the COVID pandemic, continuing to provide industry leading Mental Health care to residents of College Park and Northern Prince George’s County. A big “Thank You” also to our clinical staff who have risen to these challenges and continue to serve our community and perform an incredibly challenging job. These funds will be a wonderful relief to our incredible team. We look forward to continuing to serve the residents of College Park, the student population at the University of Maryland and residents of Greater Prince George’s County.”

Lessons Learned

Officials in the City of College Park advise ARPA recipients to be aware of the United States Treasury reporting requirements for awards to beneficiaries and sub-recipients. The distinctions and requirements for beneficiaries and sub-recipients is very important to managing a successful ARPA Program. When in doubt about classifications and expenditures, recipients can use the loss-revenue provision to achieve their goals.

7. Columbus, OH Mayor Andrew Ginther

Total SLFRF Allocation: \$187,030,138

Equitable Approach to ARPA Implementation

The City of Columbus had an open process for nonprofits, businesses, and community groups to apply for ARPA funding. Due to the high volume of applications received, it was important for the city to evaluate the applications carefully and deploy funding where it would have a great impact.

Senior staff of city departments met regularly as applications were received to discuss the applications and prioritize projects for funding. In the City of Columbus, some of the key factors in making funding decisions have been based around equity. Funding has also been prioritized to address areas of great need and communities that have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Equity Framework

Mayor Ginther outlined his Equity Agenda prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. All city departments were tasked with looking at daily operations and decision making through a lens of equity. The COVID-19 pandemic only underscored the importance of the city's focus on equity, and over the last year, members of the city's staff worked to further refine how the city prioritizes equity in decision making. This resulted in Mayor Ginther announcing the Opportunity Rising initiative in his most recent State of the city. Columbus also had an open application process for groups looking to apply for ARPA funding and equity was a key component in the evaluation of applications.

Equity-Focused Programs

- Youth: One of the Mayor's major focus areas has been around youth. Columbus has funded programs for unborn and newborn babies and summer camp or employment opportunities for teens. Daycare has been a particular area of focus. According to the city, it is critically important for the development of the children served, but also allows parents to get back to work. Columbus, like many cities, saw serious repercussions in daycare availability because of the pandemic. For example, Columbus dedicated \$2.5 million in ARPA funding for 250 childcare scholarships of up to \$10,000 for low-income families earning too much to qualify for state subsidies. That funding was coupled with a \$500,000 commitment to fund 500 one-time signing bonuses to help childcare centers recruit new teachers or rehire those that had previously left the labor market.
- Small Business: Columbus partnered with Franklin County and the Ohio Small Business Development Center at Columbus State Community College to offer \$8 million in funding for small business recovery funds. Grant funding is being prioritized for businesses that are in underserved communities and are minority-, woman- or veteran-owned. Businesses may apply for one of three grants: (i) \$5,000 recovery grants for self-employed, single entity, sole proprietors, and sole owner LLC's; (ii) \$10,000 recovery grants for small businesses with at least one employee; or (iii) \$20,000 job restoration grants for businesses with at least one full-time employee that lost employees due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Short & Long-Term Impacts

Mayor Ginther formed the Columbus' Recovery and Resiliency Advisory Committee to identify short, mid, and long-term goals for recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The 39-member group was made up of a wide range of community leaders who leveraged data and research to create the roadmap for an equitable recovery from the pandemic and guide federal funding decisions.

Through deployment of CARES and ARPA funding, the city has been able to focus funding on areas prioritized through the work of the committee. This has included several programs aimed at keeping residents in their homes and helping with utility bills, workforce programs aimed at getting residents back to work and summer youth programs aimed at keeping kids on track in school as well as reducing youth violence.

While the City of Columbus recognizes that there is still much more work ahead, the ARPA funding has allowed the city to be proactive on the noted fronts. All the noted funded programs tie into Columbus' larger city-wide goal to recover from the pandemic equitably and ensure that all residents share in the recovery.

Additional Resources

Mayor Ginther's Recovery and Resiliency Advisory Committee issued a report with 37 opportunities for the city, the public sector, nonprofits, and private sector partners to address inequities in health, jobs, housing, and digital connectivity to promote systemic community change. The committee's final report provides recommendations regarding resource allocation in three categories: (i) support: short-term critical needs such as housing, food security and human service infrastructure; (ii) readiness: mid-term stabilization needs, with a focus on digital inclusion, childcare, workforce, and higher education; and (iii) development: Long-range topics of community and economic development.

Nonprofit Engagement

The City of Columbus has worked with several local nonprofit partners on the deployment of ARPA funding. For example, Impact Community Action (Impact) has been a key partner with the city on several fronts. Before ARPA dollars were received, the city was already working with Impact on rental assistance. With ARPA dollars, the city has been able to work with Impact on a variety of workforce programs. Much of this work was focused on workforce training, but it was also understood that transportation could be a barrier after training. In view of that, the City of Columbus partnered with Impact to fund an emergency vehicle repair fund for their participants.

In addition, the City of Columbus also forged a partnership with the YMCA of Central Ohio and the Department of Public Service as part of its robust summer youth programming in 2021. The YMCA recruited youth focused on the city's Opportunity Neighborhoods and created a paid summer youth employment program. Participants spent part of their day on focused litter cleanups, while also learning about environmental issues and careers.

Lessons Learned

Officials in the City of Columbus note that one of the key components of Columbus' strategy has been collaboration. By partnering with county, nonprofit, and civic leaders, the city has been able to align strategies with key constituents. This has allowed Columbus to prioritize funding, decrease duplication of services, and put the ARPA funding into the hands of those in need faster than if the city had been operating alone.

Other Government Partners

The City of Columbus coordinated with County government officials to align its strategies and avoid duplication of services.

8. Denver, CO Mayor Michael B. Hancock

Total SLFRF Allocation: \$308,048,870

Equitable Approach to ARPA Implementation

Equity is the cornerstone of Denver's ARPA implementation program. Before a single ARPA dollar was spent, the public was engaged for input through an extensive outreach campaign that specifically sought out the opinions and perspective of populations residing in Denver's top ten neighborhoods most vulnerable to displacement. That effort was done in a manner designed to generate input. Beyond hosting a digital engagement website, residents were proactively reached through a telephone town hall effort, which brought the conversation directly to residents.

These town halls were simulcast in four languages, held on weekdays and weekends, and took place both prior to and after working hours, to encourage the greatest levels of participation. Feedback from this public engagement effort directly influenced investment decisions. As just one example, residents identified housing support for the homeless as the top community issue to tackle. In turn, investments in affordable housing solutions and for support to residents experiencing homelessness ended up with the largest share of programming in the city's first round of community ARPA allocations.

Equity is a common theme shared by almost all the city's community ARPA investments. As a result of this, the city has: (i) invested in a digital equity program designed to eliminate the digital divide currently experienced by many residents; (ii) extended support for entrepreneurship services and technical assistance for small businesses in historically marginalized neighborhoods; (iii) engaged in an effort to proactively address code violations which provide a financial crux on residents who otherwise do not possess the means to resolve them; and (iv) invested in the city's network of friend, family and neighbor child care providers, allowing hard working residents the means and flexibility to pursue employment opportunities. There are many other examples, but that small selection highlights how Denver has interwoven equity across programmatic streams.

Equity is also embedded within Denver's tracking of program performance. The city has established a comprehensive logic model to assess outputs and outcomes generated by each program. Staff from the Mayor's Office of Social Equity and Innovation have reviewed each agency's content and have made suggestions and input designed to align those objectives with the city's own community equity goals.

City staff are also provided with innovative tools meant to direct funding to the most vulnerable residents. An example of this is visible in Denver's Neighborhood Recovery Index Map, which blends economic, public health and educational data together to produce an index of the specific locations experiencing the most acute duress. Staff can use the map to ensure that dollars are geo-targeted accordingly down specific addresses.

Equity Framework

The City of Denver used a pre-existing equity framework to deploy SLFRF funds. In fact, equity considerations are embedded in Denver's annual budget process, with staff trained to analyze how their funding proposals would impact marginalized groups and neighborhoods, what unintended consequences would emerge as result of the funding, and whether the request would lessen or exacerbate harms experienced by vulnerable communities.

Equity-Focused Programs

- Neighborhood Equity & Stabilization (NEST) Neighborhood Activation Grants: Denver Economic Development & Opportunity (DEDO) supports the meaningful and necessary work of nonprofit organizations, community groups, and/or micro businesses in some of Denver's most vulnerable neighborhoods through events, meetings, and forums to engage and drive potential clients to neighborhood organizations and services. The funding from NEST grants seek to re-engage Denver's neighborhoods and business corridors to encourage people to eat/shop locally, to boost small business revenue and increase foot traffic to small business, retail, restaurant, and hospitality sectors. These grants will prioritize activity in Denver's historically under-resourced, and marginalized NEST neighborhoods. Projected outcomes from the noted efforts include a measurable increase in business activity experienced by local small businesses, and the mitigation of involuntary business displacement in priority neighborhoods.

- **Code Violation Remediation Program:** Another program funded with ARPA funds that enhanced equity in Denver is the Code Violation Remediation Program. Via this program, the Department of Human Rights and Community will mitigate displacement of Denver small business owners and homeowners in target neighborhoods by funding property improvements required by mandated code and avoid liens being placed on properties. The primary goal of this program includes enabling healthy communities that thrive, and where people are connected, supported and safe.

A strong, inclusive, and equitable economic recovery in Denver is also being enabled by the following practices which are vital to the success of the ARPA funded programs above, and others:

- **Inventory and Assessment:** The Office of Financial Empowerment and Protection (OFEP) will do an inventory of code violation fees and fines to identify the most common violations and how the related fees/fines are assessed, billed, and remediated. The program team will break down data by target neighborhood and vulnerable populations and use the information to determine how to focus remediation activities.
- **Remediation:** The OFEP will contract with nonprofit organizations to provide grant funding – up to \$50,000 per small business or \$10,000 per individual – for remediation activities such as training and technical assistance related to the code violation; or securing equipment/building infrastructure to prevent code violations in the future. OFEP will work closely with the nonprofit to establish policies and procedures for granting funds equitably and ensuring that grantees demonstrate a negative economic impact from COVID-19. This program will serve small businesses and individuals located in ten neighborhoods experiencing rapid socio-economic change and high-risk of involuntary displacement. These neighborhoods have been identified by the Denver Economic Development & Opportunity division of Neighborhood Equity & Stabilization. Individuals and small businesses in these neighborhoods have also been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, experiencing loss of employment income or increased expenses, and staffing shortages, and increased operating costs.

Short & Long-term Impacts

The City of Denver has developed a logic model that tracks activities, inputs, outputs, and outcomes. Short-term benefits are varied. Because each program is tailored to a specific group of beneficiaries, the resulting impact depends on the specific program at-hand. For instance, a program for downtown economic revitalization is designed to boost foot traffic and commerce within the city's downtown core. Conversely, a very different program meant to enable recreation centers to operate as emergency shelters will improve basic life and safety conditions during exigent events.

Nonprofit Engagement

Representatives from nonprofit organizations in Denver are participants in the Stimulus Investment Advisory Committee, known colloquially as “SIAC.” The voice of the nonprofit community is represented via the committee during discussions on funding allocations that are made prior to finalization. In addition to providing comment on proposed uses of funding, the noted committee has served as a conduit for city officials to learn about some of the challenges non-profit organizations experienced with respect to adhering to federal guidance and meeting the many performance and reporting requirements mandated by the SLFRF Final Rule. This, in turn, generated a special allocation from interest earnings generated by the ARPA funds to provide support to the non-profit community in meeting these challenges. As Denver pivots to determining allocations for its second round of funding, the committee continues to meet and is expected to do so throughout the lifecycle of the ARPA program.

Testimonials

“Without events like these, the conversation won’t be open. And when the conversation isn’t open it puts a lot of teens in danger.”
Lilly, high school senior, We Got This! Mental Health Youth Summit participant [ARPA funded programming]

Testimonials from ARPA funded public library based Digital Navigators:

Pedro, a Navy veteran had been struggling to get his benefits, and the process for gaining access to those benefits is online. Pedro did not know how to use a mouse or browser. He’s been working with a digital navigator to learn the basics of using a computer and the internet, and the navigator has been providing support while Pedro learns the intricacies of online forms and submitting documents.

After hearing about the Digital Navigator program from library staff, a customer walked in today and expected some help with computer skills. In the beginning, he had trouble entering his email password and resetting his Gmail password. After staying with the digital navigator, he had finished his resume and became more confident in using the computer. He has already set another appointment with the digital navigator next week. When he was about to leave, he said that “If you want a letter of recommendation, I can write it for you. You are an A plus teacher. Thanks for your help.”

Lessons Learned

Officials in Denver note that as the reporting requirements for SLFRF-funded projects are robust, determining a plan for measuring the success of a given program is vital. United States Treasury guidance provides that each SLFRF program must be measured by an output and outcome measure. Settling on what these measures are well in advance of program implementation is critical and determining the logistics of making those measurements is just as important. Officials in Denver encourage city officials to consider the following questions in the noted process:

- Are adequate systems established to collect performance data on a regular basis, and are those systems the same as what other agencies and departments use, or completely unique?
- Do subrecipients or third parties understand the performance requirements and are those expectations outlined in a subaward or contractual agreement?
- Do those third parties have the organizational capacity to collect this data?
- Do all involved personnel understand what information must be reported in quarterly and annual reporting required by the Treasury?
- How is equity interwoven into all of this?

When attempting to answer these questions after a program is approved, the roll-out can be uneven or potentially delayed. Settling on a firm measurement plan and identifying any gaps well in advance will pave the way for a much more successful, productive use of ARPA SLFRF dollars.

Funds From Other Sources

Broadly, the City and County of Denver has not raised funding from the private sector, investors, or philanthropists to complement or supplement ARPA SLFRF-funded projects. However, a few very specific uses of funding do so. One example is a Revolving Loan Fund for Nonprofit Organizations. The Department of Human Rights and Community Partnerships will join three community foundations to engage the Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF), an experienced Community Development Financial Institution, in making interest free loans to nonprofits. NFF is responsible for the administration of the Fund, the loans, and to establish a program to strengthen both individual nonprofits while individual community members can continue to access needed services. Another example was created to support affordable housing in Denver. The Department of Housing Stability will provide financing that assists in the development and preservation of affordable housing projects. It is possible that further blending of funding streams may occur as the city turns its attention to a second round of community investments in 2022.

Other Government Partners

The City of Denver regularly engages members of the State of Colorado’s Recovery Office to share news, strategy, and to align both parties’ respective efforts. In addition, the city is a participant in a bi-weekly forum hosted by the Government Finance Officers Association where representatives share information on their proposed or realized uses of ARPA funds.

9. Fontana, CA Mayor Acquanetta Warren

Total SLFRF Allocation: \$50,257,113

Equitable Approach to ARPA Implementation

The Mayor of the City Fontana is leveraging ARPA funds to improve services and assistance to several underserved communities and address the needs of a significant population of residents experiencing homelessness. For homeless residents, the City of Fontana is focusing on providing housing and housing assistance. It is the goal of the city to provide up to 100 plus beds and direct housing services at varying levels of autonomy to residents experiencing homelessness. Officials at the city believe that they cannot solve homelessness without engaging the problems of substance abuse and mental health. Accordingly, homelessness housing will also include services to address the noted issues. Fontana also plans to provide a pathway to independence for each potential resident that the city helps house, to avoid a stagnant and growing burden on the community.

Historically, the city also has a large community of residents who are socioeconomically challenged and who fall into “hard to define” groupings and need assistance. The City of Fontana is planning several projects that will help such populations and financially challenged communities of color directly and indirectly.

Additionally, the city has projects to support physical wellbeing in a safe and no-cost manner, through outdoor exercise facilities. The city aims to make streets, sidewalks, and mass transit facilities safer through rehabilitation and security measures, allowing students a safer route to and from school and employees safer routes to and from work.

The City of Fontana is also improving the condition and lifespan of some of the city’s infrastructure services including sewer, storm drains, and parks. The city will also be working to expand free broadband internet access to anyone visiting city centers. Finally, to help underserved aspiring entrepreneurs, officials in Fontana are developing a small business loan program. This effort will provide loan forgiveness to businesses that go on to become a successful job generation resource in the City of Fontana.

Equity-Focused Programs

- Addressing Homelessness: One of Fontana’s largest efforts focusing on underserved and underrepresented residents is mitigating homelessness. Once the city fully funds the envisioned homeless facilities, it expects to be able to provide a bed for every homeless person in the city, and possibly in the region. Just as important as providing no and low-cost housing options, as noted above, it is a priority for the City of Fontana to help address mental health and substance abuse issues. The City of Fontana hopes to develop a pathway to independence and support for individuals experiencing homelessness to prevent the facilities from becoming unsustainable burdens on the community.
- Streets and Sidewalks: The city is also working on projects to improve the conditions of sidewalks in underserved communities, recognizing that it is critical to provide safe walking routes to and from schools. In addition, Fontana is also focusing on the conditions of its streets and bridges to allow safe busing and safe general traffic throughout the city.
- Broadband Internet: For a significant percentage of Fontana residents, the only internet access in the home is via a cell phone. As a result, Fontana is focusing on making free broadband internet available at all city centers to help residents close the digital divide.

Short & Long-Term Impacts

Short-term benefits of the City of Fontana’s ARPA investments include improved public safety, access to broadband internet, and a more accessible and stable local government. Over a long-term horizon, the City of Fontana aims to solve homelessness in the community completely. The city also expects to have more robust and resilient infrastructure and safer streets and sidewalks.

Additional Resources

Fontana worked with other local jurisdictions to understand the scope of key issues facing the city, and to identify success stories that others can share in solving them. The city has visited Tiny Home communities in Baldwin Park, vacant buildings that cities are converting to homeless housing, and purpose-built regional homeless shelters. City staff have visited and interviewed homeless residents in the community, and have researched the causes of homelessness and the impacts it has on the population and the communities they live in.

Fontana has provided information to its city council and has received feedback regarding priorities. In addition to addressing homelessness, Fontana youth are of critical importance to the city and the City Council. The city works closely with the four school districts serving Fontana students and is attempting to bridge any gaps between city services and school district responsibilities. Physical health outside of school, access to quality high speed internet, and safe access to school and community resources have also been identified as additional priorities that may be resourced.

Funding From Other Sources

The City of Fontana expects that some of its projects will have an impact on its general fund in the future. In addition, the city is also seeking grants and discretionary spending from state and federal representatives. As some projects mature, the city expects to engage both private sector and nonprofit entities to help sustain them.

Other Government Partners

The City of Fontana is working with the State of California, San Bernardino County, the San Bernardino County Sheriff's department, and other regional cities. Many of the issues that the city faces are neither locally caused nor locally solvable and benefit from being addressed in collaboration with other governments.

10. Fort Worth, TX Mayor Mattie Parker

Total SLFRF Allocation: \$173,745,090

Equitable Approach to ARPA Implementation

The City of Fort Worth is utilizing innovative technology resources, and equitable policy and process analysis to deploy ARPA SLFRF funds to proactively reduce existing and potential municipal disparities and encourage resilient and equitable community growth. To identify and prioritize funding for ARPA projects, Fort Worth utilizes historical municipal disparity data visualized in geo-spatial map layers. Initially focusing on geo-spatial clusters of racialized community groups (Super Majority Minority Areas -SMMAs and Majority Minority Areas -MMAs), the city identified a more precise, targeted prioritization method that includes elements beyond race called “Geographic Disparity Zones” or GDZs. GDZs include multiple disparity indicators, most notably residual impacts of Fort Worth’s 1940 Redline Map, in conjunction with other equity indicators, such as English as a Second Language (ESL), proximity to healthcare facilities, access to affordable housing, rent burden, as well as access to capital and other financial networks.

Equity-Focused Programs

- Evans and Rosedale Redevelopment Recovery Plan - Affordable Housing Program: The thirty-six properties (collectively, the “Property”) are located within the boundaries of the Historic Southside Neighborhood (76104) where the poverty rate is slightly above 20%, and the number of uninsured residents is extremely high even though the city’s medical district is in proximity. Mobility remains an issue in the noted area where 67% of residents identify as Black. Between early 2019 and September of 2021, HFC, LDC, and city staff have negotiated a term sheet with Hoque Global Development. Hoque is proposing a two-phased redevelopment that will result in a total of at least \$70 million worth of investment; approximately 292 multifamily units, 20 townhomes, and 28 live-work units, with at least 20% of the total units being affordable; a cultural square; parks, and other public spaces. The redevelopment requires the purchase of the 30 properties from the HFC at a price of \$3,595,977.13 and the five properties from the LDC for \$537,076.29 and allocates funding to pay for the one parcel owned by the city and valued at \$112,500.00. As authorized by Texas Local Government Code Section 272.001(g), the Property, which has a combined fair market value of \$4,245,553.42, would be sold to Hoque for monetary consideration of \$1 each for the purpose of developing low- to moderate income housing. To effectuate and maintain the public purpose of affordable housing, the Property will be subject to a lien through a Deed of Trust to Secure Performance, ensuring the required affordable housing is offered at the Property for a period of at least 15 years. If the affordable housing requirements are not met, Hoque would be required to repay the full fair market value of the Property out of its own separate funds.
- CDFI Friendly Fort Worth - Access to Capital Program: Leveraging an initial \$3 million dollar investment with ARPA funds, the City of Fort Worth is working with CDFI Friendly America to create a community-led, community-driven organization - CDFI Friendly Fort Worth - to increase the supply of flexible, affordable, and patient financing in the city specializing in financing small businesses, affordable housing, nonprofits, and commercial real estate in historically under-served communities. There are more than 1,200 CDFIs in the United States managing more than \$220 billion in all 50 states in urban, rural, and native communities. The city believes that increasing the CDFI financing network in Fort Worth can create opportunities, inclusion, and wealth for entrepreneurs, homeowners, renters, businesses, and developers. Fort Worth is currently underserved by CDFIs: from 2005 through 2019, Fort Worth received just \$39 in CDFI financing per person, much less than the state average of \$119 per person and the national average of \$235 million per person. CDFI Friendly America will help the city understand where there are financing gaps that CDFIs can fill and show the city how to work with CDFIs. CDFI Friendly Fort Worth will do the work of connecting local financing needs to CDFIs that can meet those needs. CDFI Friendly America expects that Fort Worth will see new CDFI financing of more than \$100 million over the next five (5) years. The city will also use a small fund of local capital to accelerate the financing. To do this, CDFI Friendly America will meet with hundreds of Fort Worth residents—entrepreneurs, homeowners, renters, developers, business owners, nonprofit leaders, community leaders, bankers, public officials, and others. Since the CDFI Friendly Fort Worth Kick Off in January 2022, the organization has received over 216 loan requests with 17 CDFIs new to the Fort Worth market reviewing over \$128 million in financing for small business development, and start-up affordable housing development in neighborhood revitalization target areas, nonprofit organization development, commercial real estate projects, and personal use in lieu of predatory payday lending.

- **Neighborhood Wi-Fi Project - Digital Equity Program:** The City of Fort Worth Neighborhood Wi-Fi project will bring internet access to approximately 10,000 homes in five low-income neighborhoods in the community to improve citizens' ability to participate in remote learning and employment opportunities, improve public safety, increase community engagement, promote economic revitalization, provide supportive services to reduce poverty and create paths to self-sufficiency. The Fort Worth Independent School District has agreed to a partnership for nodal placement at schools within the neighborhoods being served in addition to city properties. By partnering with the Fort Worth Independent School District, households in five low-income, disproportionately impacted communities in Fort Worth will be able to receive free internet services. The outreach and community engagement program will provide handouts and flyers in both English and Spanish, Web FAQ, and will leverage partnerships with community organizations to educate residents in digital literacy training, access to the appropriate devices, and provide technical support. The expected outcomes of the program are to close the gap between lack of internet access and neighborhood improvement programs; support remote education, employment search, remote work, telemedicine, and access to other community services; provide the same quality of service as in libraries and community centers; and create a bridge to more widely available wired broadband internet access.

Short & Long-Term Impacts

As a result of its ARPA funded projects, the City of Fort Worth expects to address long standing disparities in the Fort Worth community for access to capital, equity in broadband infrastructure, and seeks to expand the stock of decent affordable housing for working class residents, and achieve many other short- and long-term positive outcomes. In addition, ARPA SLFRF-funded projects have provided a dignified pathway to homeownership, access to a digital future of innovation, and legacy building businesses in under-resourced Geographic Disparity Zones (GDZs) in Fort Worth.

Additional Resources

Several of the City of Fort Worth's ARPA funded projects drew resources from a range of collaborators. For example, the Neighborhood Wi-Fi Project, funded with ARPA SLFRF funds, was executed in collaboration with the Fort Worth Independent School District and ONCOR to develop and implement the launch of digital access points equal to city library and community center access for low to moderate income communities citywide.

The Evans and Rosedale Redevelopment Plan funded with ARPA SLFRF funds required the collaboration between public city departments including Economic Development, Parks and Recreation, Development Services, Diversity and Inclusion, Property Management, and private developer Hoque Global Development. Together, the noted stakeholders designed a development project that produced affordable housing units in the Historic Southside Neighborhood of Fort Worth.

The CDFI-Friendly Fort Worth project required the collaboration between the Economic Development Department, Diversity and Inclusion Department, CDFI Friendly America, national traditional lenders, and financial institutions. In addition, the project leveraged a national network of 1,200 CDFIs to provide access to capital for Black-owned, Hispanic-owned, Asian-owned, Native and Indigenous-owned and women-owned business firms, mortgage borrowers, developers, and individual consumers susceptible to predatory lenders.

Nonprofit Engagement

As part of the CDFI Friendly Fort Worth implementation process, the city engaged small nonprofit organizations with focus groups across education, small business support, and first-time homeowner support sectors. Additionally, the city hosted several one on one large nonprofit organization meetings with the North Texas Community Foundation, Rainwater Foundation, and CDFI Friendly America representatives.

Lessons Learned

City officials in Fort Worth advise other city leaders to make sure that they have current feedback and consistent partnership from the community they seek to support with ARPA SLFRF funded projects. If city officials are not engaging the community to make sure that the problem they are trying to solve is a priority problem for the community, they might be wasting precious resources with actions the community won't support or utilize.

Funding From Other Sources

Using the initial \$3 million ARPA SLFRF funds, CDFI Friendly Fort Worth has raised over \$10 million from national financial institutions to sustain the much-needed access to capital program.

Other Government Partners

The City of Fort Worth's Broadband Infrastructure project required the collaboration of North Texas Council of Governments, ONCOR, Fort Worth Independent School District, and the Texas Broadband Development Office.

11. Greensboro, NC Mayor Nancy B. Vaughan

Total SLFRF Allocation: \$59,430,051

Equitable Approach to ARPA Implementation

The City of Greensboro approached the deployment of ARPA funds guided by an equity lens and using several community and review efforts. First, community input was prioritized in May 2021 to ensure that the city's prioritization of ARPA funds sufficiently met the community interest. Through the City of Greensboro Budget Simulation tool, the city solicited this input by asking priority questions directly related to equity concerns, including disproportionate pandemic impact on marginalized communities, investment in Qualified Census Tracts (QCTs), affordable housing, and community programming. The community provided clear feedback that these priority areas were high, thus prompting Equity and investments in QCTs to hold top priority in the prioritization process.

In addition, city staff and the City Council collectively developed a prioritization tool that reflected community input for evaluating city and community projects proposed for ARPA funding. The evaluation tool included review criteria that addressed 9 focus areas which reflected the Federal guidelines from the ARPA Interim Final Rule (the most up to date provided at the time), Council Strategic Priorities, and community priorities identified through community engagement efforts. The focus areas included equity and QCTs as top criteria. Equity was represented in almost every criteria as a contributing factor to a successful proposed project.

Once the city opened an application process for community projects, applicants were provided the criteria and encouraged to align work and impact. This enabled applicants to consider strategic use of ARPA funds in the context of equity and how funds would provide the furthest reach in the community. As a diverse group of city staff from 18 departments began the evaluation process, the criteria provided the foundation of the review of applications, thus aligning all priorities throughout the entire community input, application, and review process.

The City of Greensboro has several frameworks woven throughout city plans and departmental goals. Some examples include Council Priority areas – all of which are all approached through an equity lens. The priority areas in the noted frameworks include affordable housing, equitable transportation options, economic development, and transparent and accountable government.

In addition, several city plans address equity as a top priority, including the city's Comprehensive plan, Housing GSO plan, and Plan2Play plan, among others. The city employs an Equity and Inclusion Officer that addresses internal and community equity concerns through programming and training. The city's Human Rights department is dedicated to ensuring that city residents are treated equitably in the community and in working with the City of Greensboro services.

Equity-Focused Programs

- Southwoods Low-Income Housing Project: An example of an equity project currently under development includes a proposal to rehab a Low-Income Housing Tax Credit property called Southwoods. The property was built in 1996 and contains 59 studio apartments and a community room. Historically, this property has served formerly homeless and/or disabled residents, as the studio layout of the units lends itself to serving single individuals from those populations. These residents have household incomes that are at or below 50% of the Area Median Income.

Short & Long-Term Impacts

The anticipated benefits of the Southwoods project is serving the formerly homeless and/or disabled population. As the people in the Greensboro community try to recover from the impact this pandemic has had on the city, housing that is accessible to homeless and/or disabled individuals is more important than ever. After the rehab is complete, the property will continue to serve the formerly homeless and/or disabled population that it has served historically, but with the added benefit of 10 units being set aside specifically for that population.

Additional Resources

While the actual development of ARPA-funding projects in the City of Greensboro is still underway, some partnerships have been leveraged in the application and review process for projects. Most of the partnerships are city staff collaborations on the review of applications and understanding of community needs through an equity lens. Once project funding is allocated to community groups, the City of Greensboro expects that those organizations will become critical partners in carrying out the work and realizing equity impacts in the community.

Nonprofit Engagement

While the City of Greensboro has not yet partnered with nonprofit organizations on implementing ARPA funds, it is very likely that this will occur when the review process of applications is complete. Most community projects submitted to the city through the noted process are proposals from local non-profit organizations.

Lessons Learned

City officials from Greensboro note that, when structuring ARPA community input and an application process, it is critical to have clear criteria and explanation of funding decisions. While Greensboro projects are still in consideration, communication with the community is critical, as ARPA funds are highly visible. Transparency and accountability in the process should be a high priority, regardless of what stage a local government is engaged.

Funding From Other Sources

Some projects that are under consideration in the City of Greensboro include private funding partnerships, federal program dollars, and nonprofit investments.

Other Government Partners

The City of Greensboro has communicated with and worked closely with the ARPA team at Guilford County. This is a mutual benefit, as city and county projects can have overlap and collaboration opportunities. Furthermore, staff has participated in many monthly ARPA meetups, listening sessions, collaborative groups, and University of North Carolina School of Government events to develop a successful ARPA strategy.

12. Kansas City, MO Mayor Quinton Lucas

Total SLFRF Allocation: \$194,776,376

Equitable Approach to ARPA Implementation

The ARPA SLFRF program allocated Kansas City approximately \$194 million, in two payments of \$97.4 million each. This funding has been used to combat the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and pave the way for an inclusive and equitable recovery. In Kansas City, this necessarily meant acknowledging that the impacts of the pandemic have not been felt equally across the city and that historic funding flows have left too many residents and neighborhoods behind.

From the onset, Kansas City created opportunities for community members to shape the use of these funds. A community-led analysis on the impacts of the pandemic was conducted by experts and community leaders to identify the key areas of need. With these results, ARPA funds were allocated across departments, nonprofits, beneficiaries, and local businesses to pave the way for a successful recovery. The primary goal of city leadership in Kansas City is to utilize the ARPA funds so that Kansas City is in a stronger economic position than it was pre-pandemic. Towards that end, initial use of funds included providing all residents access to public health services to keep themselves and their families safe.

Equity Framework

The pandemic and unrest of the past two years led leaders in Kansas City to reevaluate its approach to equity. The city's current equity framework was built around equity standards developed by each business unit. To help the city centralize and be intentional in its approach to equity, the city is currently searching for a Chief Equity Officer. This individual will work collaboratively to create equity goals, objectives, and strategies that will provide a stronger and more consistent framework across all of city services, programs, and projects.

Equity-Focused Programs

The Lykins Neighborhood Housing project is in Kansas City's Historic Northeast area and is a vibrantly diverse neighborhood filled with different cultures, languages and circles of friends and families. The Lykins Neighborhood Housing Support Services staff is utilizing ARPA funding to provide affordable housing to low-income residents and marginalized communities in the Historic Northeast Kansas City. Working with almost twenty (20) rehabbers and development groups, the neighborhood has become its own Master Developer with the goal of improving properties and preserving a diverse mix of family income that reflects the cultural diversity of the neighborhood.

The Lykins Neighborhood Housing project has preserved or constructed 41 units of affordable single-family homes, 5 additional single-family units are in the pipeline, and 13 single family properties are under construction. Transitional Housing is a supportive, yet temporary accommodation that is designed to fill the gap between living without a home to a permanent housing solution, by offering structure, supervision, support, life skills, and case management. The program serves both individuals and families by providing housing for 90-days for up to 500 houseless individuals, case management and wraparound services to individuals/families in the program, and collaboration with agencies that provide a continuum of care such as legal entities, medical units, nonprofits and other organizations to establish a network that will assist with service delivery for program participants, and securing a permanent housing solution that meets the needs of the individual or family. To date, the transitional housing program has accomplished the following:

- 400 individuals were housed during the first 90 days of the program
- Over 200 Individuals applied for \$ 344 Individuals completed housing needs assessment
- Over 80 participants completed Vulnerability Index
- Over 61 individuals secured permanent employment
- Over 30 individuals and families have exited the program into permanent housing
- 2 healthy babies were delivered, receiving prenatal and postnatal care while in temporary housing
- Over 30 individuals connected to substance abuse / mental health treatment programs
- 14 life-saving or serious medical interventions

Short & Long-Term Impacts

The Housing Trust Fund has been a goal of the city for many years. The Housing Trust Fund provides grants to produce and preserve affordable housing for extremely low and very low-income households. Per a City Council Resolution, the City Manager was directed to develop a plan to fund the construction and rehabilitation of affordable housing units, and to report such plans to the City Council within 120 days. The city use ARPA and SLFRF funds to invest substantial resources to implement this plan. Specifically, the city dedicated \$25 million (\$12,500,000.00 from the first ARPA tranche and another \$12,500,000.00 from the second) to the Housing Trust Fund to support housing stability programming citywide. Eligible uses of funding include supporting affordable residential and multi-family housing, special needs housing for families, seniors and vulnerable residents, conversion of unused buildings and schools, preservation of housing, and community led development.

The city is also taking advantage of the flexibility of the ARPA SLFRF funds to let community members direct the implementation of neighborhood-based projects through a \$13 million solicitation, called Rebuild KC, run by the city's Department of Neighborhoods. Unlike many other city solicitations, Rebuild KC has reduced application requirements and a wide range of eligible uses to make these funds more accessible to a wider range of community members. The city received an overwhelming response: over 1,200 applications for projects designed to build better neighborhoods as they recover from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Additional Resources

Kansas City has combined bond funds with the ARPA funding in a joint effort to create transitional housing opportunities, and long-term housing assistance for homeless and in-need residents. The city's goal is to provide 150 affordable housing units with the combined bond and ARPA funding.

Nonprofit Engagement

Legal Aid of Western Missouri (Legal Aid), a nonprofit partner, has a long track record of working with Kansas City's low-income and underserved communities. From the beginning of the pandemic, and with the assistance of ARPA funding, Legal Aid has worked with residents to prevent evictions, help residents gain access to the CARES payments, and provided residents a low-income tax clinic. The organization works with survivors of domestic violence, veterans, and help people with healthcare and public benefits. The COVID-19 pandemic escalated the need for Legal Aid at the same time as the organization's donations were dropping. ARPA funding has allowed the organization to respond to the pandemic at a level that would not have been possible without government funding.

Lessons Learned

At the beginning of the pandemic, Kansas City's Mayor and city leaders made the early decision to take care of the most vulnerable, guided by the premise that as leaders it is their job to make sure the gaps are filled, so that the most vulnerable do not slip through the cracks. For example, people experiencing homelessness are especially vulnerable during a time of crisis, and the COVID-19 pandemic escalated that vulnerability. With hospital beds in short supply, people experiencing homelessness and mild to moderate COVID-19 could not stay in the hospital and had to be discharged without a safe place to go. The city secured a hotel that was sitting vacant because of the pandemic and created a safe place for people experiencing homelessness and COVID-19 to recuperate. Via such efforts, the Mayor and Kansas City leaders worked with the community to create this solution that provided dignity and safety to a community that was suffering.

Funding From Other Sources

Kansas City is actively seeking to leverage ARPA SLFRF investments with private sector support and additional funds from the state and federal government, particularly funds from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

Other Government Partners

In developing its ARPA strategy, regional collaboration was key particularly in the earliest stages of Kansas City's pandemic response. Kansas City officials met with regional leaders from neighboring counties and large cities regularly for the past two years as the city designed its COVID-19 response, including discussing how it was deploying ARPA SLFRF funds.

13. Knoxville, TN Mayor Indya Kincannon

Total SLFRF Allocation: \$42,453,411

Equitable Approach to ARPA Implementation

The City of Knoxville recognized early that the economic chaos prompted by COVID-19 had a profound and disproportionate impact on its residents and neighborhoods. Working with community partners, the city recognized where ARPA funds could be leveraged and have the most impact, both in the short-term for emergency needs, and in the long-term to invest in the community.

The City of Knoxville recognized that many smaller grassroots organizations do not always qualify for ARPA and traditional funding sources. Working with the United Way and other nonprofit partners, Knoxville wanted to create funding streams and mechanisms for such organizations to build their capacity and continue and expand their services.

Equity Framework

The City of Knoxville has an Equity Committee, comprised of department heads and supervisors within city government, who are tasked with looking across departments at equity challenges and evaluating opportunities. Many factors were considered by city leaders in the allocation of ARPA funding, including issues of equity, and the work was done in partnership with organizations that shared the noted values and priorities.

Equity-Focused Programs

- **United Way Program:** The City of Knoxville provided \$1.05 million in SLFRF funds to United Way to redistribute to local nonprofits, providing direct services that support the public health response to the pandemic, address negative economic impacts, and serve particularly vulnerable populations. Funds are distributed by United Way through a competitive application process that is intentionally designed to reduce some of the administrative barriers facing small and grassroots non-profit groups.
- **The Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee Program:** The Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee (CAC) has played a critical role in supporting the public health response to the pandemic, addressing negative economic impacts, and serving particularly vulnerable populations, including senior citizens, lower-income residents, and persons with disabilities. The city provided \$2 million in SLFRF funds to the CAC in the current and subsequent fiscal year. Of these funds, \$1.3 million supports critical transportation services provided by the CAC, including transportation for patients experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, as well as general on-demand services that support workforce connections to aid in economic recovery. An additional \$700,000 of funding is being used to: (i) Invest in the staffing, services, technology, and facilities necessary to help vulnerable residents address critical needs during, and as a result of, the pandemic, (ii) provide direct assistance and case management to families, and (iii) address food and housing needs through the work of Beardsley Farm and weatherization/health homes programs.
- **Arts & Culture Alliance of Greater Knoxville Program:** The city provided \$1.3 million in SLFRF funds to the Arts & Culture Alliance of Greater Knoxville that supports a diverse community of artists, arts organizations, and cultural institutions. These funds specifically support a series of Recovery and Renewal Grants to local arts and culture nonprofits and projects, with a focus on those that provide opportunities within communities historically underserved and/or disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, as well as city's neighborhoods. Funds will support arts and cultural programming, as well as specific projects that can support Knoxville's recovery by supporting jobs and education, boosting tourism, and providing community benefits.

Nonprofit Engagement

Nonprofit organizations play a critical role in providing the direct services that help Knoxville residents respond to, and recover from, the COVID-19 pandemic. The city provided funds to several nonprofits to either use directly or redistribute to organizations that support underserved and underrepresented communities in Knoxville, many of which are reflected in the equity focused programs summarized in this case study.

Short & Long-Term Benefits

While some of the ARPA funding allocated by the City of Knoxville will provide short-term benefits of meeting immediate and emergency needs in housing, food, and transportation, several collaborations with long-term impacts have been funded in behavioral and mental health, violence interruption, and water systems.

Mental and behavioral health needs have grown in Knoxville because of the pandemic. The city, in partnership with Knox County, is purchasing a building in a community previously served by a now-shuttered hospital to create an urgent care behavioral health facility. The facility will be designed to assess, triage, treat, hold, and connect adults with urgent behavioral health needs to the best resources for their condition. This behavioral health facility will have the ability to receive self-referrals as well as ambulance, police, and family-accompanied patients experiencing behavioral and mental health crises.

Knoxville, like many cities, has also experienced an increase in violence because of the pandemic. ARPA funds will also be used to support the work of a new Community Safety Director to assist in developing and supporting evidence based, data informed, community led strategies that recognize violence, especially gun violence, as a public health crisis.

Significant ARPA funds will also be provided to utilities for water system projects located within the city. These projects include the replacement of aging, galvanized water pipes in the water distribution system and partial funding for the construction of new water filters at the water treatment plant. In addition, the city will undertake a variety of stormwater projects to manage, reduce, treat, or recapture stormwater or subsurface drainage water. All of the noted initiatives align with the city of Knoxville's goals of a safe, environmentally responsible, and resilient water systems.

Other Government Partners

The City of Knoxville has worked closely with County officials on its ARPA and SLFRF strategy.

14. Kenosha, WI Mayor John Martin Antaramian

Total SLFRF Allocation: \$26,488,543

Equitable Approach to ARPA Implementation

When developing ARPA SLFRF strategies, leaders in Kenosha evaluated several factors, including areas of greatest need. The neighborhoods of greatest need in Kenosha are in the central part of the city. Much of Kenosha's planning and redevelopment efforts have focused on six neighborhoods surrounding the former AMC/Chrysler Plant Site. This 107-acre former manufacturing site has been remediated at a cost of approximately \$30 million and stands ready for development which is being implemented. This site is in a qualified census tract, surrounded by five other QCT's. The area contains about 25% of the city's population - 41% of which is Hispanic and 45% is African American. In addition, 10% of adults have a grade school education or less, versus 5% city wide, and 12% of area residents have a college degree, versus 23% city wide.

The city has worked continuously with community residents, educational institutions, and community based nonprofit organizations to plan and implement several educational and economic development projects. The noted projects have been allocated more than 70% of the ARPA SLFRF funds the city received in its first tranche.

Equity Framework

The City of Kenosha has been working with a broad cross-section of residents and community partners since the civil disturbance that occurred in August of 2020. The Mayor and members of his staff conducted listening sessions in area churches for weeks after the unrest. Prior to that, the city had already been working on plans for redevelopment at the Chrysler Site and in the Uptown Neighborhood which suffered the most damage (approximately 20 buildings damaged or destroyed by fire). The city began a formal planning process for the development of the mixed-use Kenosha Innovation Neighborhood as a "Live/Work/Play" community focused on innovation and development to draw companies and jobs to the area.

The highly interactive process to support the noted redevelopment began in March of 2021. It involved multiple meetings with stakeholders in the business, education, neighborhood, and non-profit communities. At the same time, public meetings were held in a strategic location in the Uptown Neighborhood, with more than 300 participants across 3 meetings in 6 months, augmented by more than 1,000 people participating in surveys and providing input online.

All the meetings involved a majority of Kenosha residents, especially residents within underserved and underrepresented neighborhoods. The feedback generated in the meetings assisted the city in adopting and refining ARPA expenditure plans to provide the greatest possible impact in these neighborhoods.

Equity-Focused Programs

- **Library/Interactive Learning Center Innovation:** As part of a mixed-use development with 70 units of Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) Housing, the city will be developing a new 7,500 square foot Library/Interactive Learning Center geared toward children from kindergarten through fifth grade. Kenosha schools saw 3rd grade reading proficiency drop by more than 10% pre-COVID19 to post-COVID19. This new facility, in the heart of the most challenged neighborhoods, will provide a range of services to assist young people in enhancing their reading capabilities and with interactive learning opportunities.
- **Kenosha Emerging Leaders Academy:** The city purchased a former bank building in the Uptown Neighborhood prior to the civil unrest in the area. Kenosha has worked closely with four higher education partners in the region (UW-Parkside, Carthage College, Herzing University and Gateway Technical College) and multiple community-based organizations to develop the Kenosha Emerging Leaders Academy. This \$3.5 million rehabilitation of the former Brown Bank building will create a focal point for young people to explore potential educational and career pathways. Community partners including the YMCA, Kenosha schools, and the Mahone Family Foundation will provide several youth leadership development, career exploration, job shadowing, mentoring, and other programs.

- **Stem High School:** The city has worked with the business community (Kenosha Area Business Alliance), Kenosha Unified School District and Gateway Technical College to build a new STEM High School (Lakeview Technology Academy), at the Kenosha Innovation Neighborhood site. This school will replace a 20-year-old school in a former industrial building, located 8 miles from the center of the city, in a suburban business park. The new location will greatly enhance access for all students in the city, especially students of color, to pursue STEM curriculum. Gateway Technical College will provide classes to high school students during the day and to adult learners in the evening. Lakeview Technology Academy will be one of the first two keystone projects to anchor the Kenosha Innovation Neighborhood.

Short & Long-Term Impacts

The equity focused programs that the City of Kenosha invested in with ARPA funds that are summarized above are in the center of neighborhoods that have fewer opportunities compared to other parts of the city and region. Via this strategy, the city is opening access to families and young people to walk, bike, take transit or otherwise get to these programs close to home. Working in partnership with K-12 schools, higher educational partners, the library system, and community-based program partners, the city will reach young people who have significant needs and provide them with new opportunities. The partners involved in the noted programs have worked with young people who have faced personal and family challenges, lack of access, and trauma. The city is committed to meeting these kids and families where they are and providing new pathways forward.

The short and long term impacts the city hopes to achieve via the noted ARPA funded programs, include:

- Improved reading skills by young people K-5th Grade
- Greater awareness and access to educational pathways and career pathways
- Exposure to technology, STEM curriculum and mentoring
- Exposure to work settings, internships, job shadowing and community projects
- Access to higher educational partners, academic and career advising, college preparation, admissions, and financial assistance
- Enhanced entrepreneurial (or business) development efforts focused on founders of color and women
- Greater number of start-up businesses, including technology-oriented businesses
- Enhanced job opportunities in STEM and related fields
- Neighborhood revitalization on a main street (22nd Avenue in Uptown Neighborhood) and community (Kenosha Innovation Neighborhood) scale

Additional Resources

The city of Kenosha is coupling ARPA/SLFRF Funds with other funding sources that include Tax Increment Financing, Economic Development Administration Grants, State of Wisconsin Neighborhood Investment Grants and Workforce Innovation Grants to build these projects and implement these programs.

The city has worked with a cross-section of community based organizations (YMCA, Mahone Family Foundation, Jockey Foundation), local schools (Kenosha Unified School District), higher education partners (Carthage College, Gateway Technical College, Herzing University and UW-Parkside), State Government (Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, Department of Administration, Department of Work Force Development) and the private sector (Kenosha Area Business Alliance, Corporate Partners) to advance the noted ARPA programs.

Nonprofit Engagement

The City of Kenosha worked closely with the YMCA on the development of the Kenosha Emerging Leader's Academy. The YMCA provides "Teen Achiever" leadership development programs that will be one of the programs offered in the new facility. The YMCA will also coordinate with Jockey International Headquarters two blocks away, and their foundation to open a Best Buy Teen Tech Center. This center will provide after school access to computer workstations, audio and video production booths, 3D printing and other technology for kids in the neighborhood. Studies have indicated 96% of young people who utilized Teen Tech Centers become committed to post-secondary education or training. Seventy percent report an increased interest in STEM fields.

Leaders in Kenosha have also worked closely with the Mahone Family Foundation which will have offices and run programs at the Kenosha Emerging Leaders Academy. Mahone Family Foundation's Career Exploration Organization (CEO) provides first generation and/or lower-income students of color with an academic and business mentor to assist in pursuing academic and career goals.

Testimonials

"We are excited and proud to partner with Jockey and the YMCA to bring a Best Buy Teen Tech Center to Kenosha," said Andrea Wood, Best Buy's vice president of social impact. "Best Buy's commitment to improving tech equity among teens has never been more relevant than it is today. We hope the new Teen Tech Center will offer the youth of Kenosha new opportunities to build brighter futures through tech."

"The magic of the Kenosha Emerging Leaders Academy will be in the collaboration," said Cindy Altergott, CEO of the Kenosha YMCA. "Innovation comes from collaboration. We're all excited to build upon one another's programming to strengthen the impact that any one of us could have individually. I know I speak for all the partners when I say we are most excited to see what the students will learn and achieve at the Academy, and we look forward to seeing them become the next leaders of our community."

Lessons Learned

Officials in Kenosha advise that is important to reach out to potential partners in schools, K-12 and higher education, business, and corporate circles, but especially in the community. The closer people are to the neighborhoods in need, the more clarity they have about those needs and how to shape programs that can have a positive impact. The power of all these programs is in the partnerships. It is also important to recognize that collaboration moves at the speed of trust, and often a lot of communication and meetings must take place before the path forward becomes clear when devising ARPA funding strategies.

Funding From Other Sources

The city of Kenosha has raised money from several following sources to complement its ARPA funding including: (i) the State of Wisconsin Work Force Innovation Grant program; (ii) the State of Wisconsin Neighborhood Investment Grant program; (iii) U.S. Economic Development Administration Grant; (iv) Jockey International Foundation sponsorship of Best Buy Teen Tech Center; (v) Gateway Technical College Capital Investment; (vi) Kenosha Unified Schools Capital Investment; and (vii) Kenosha Area Business Alliance Capital Investment and financing.

Other Government Partners

The City of Kenosha coordinated with the State of Wisconsin, Kenosha Unified School District, Gateway Technical College, and the University of Wisconsin to develop its ARPA strategy. In addition, the city also worked with Parkside on program development and maximizing use of various funding sources.

15. Louisville, KY Mayor Greg Fischer

Total SLFRF Allocation: \$388,295,772

Equitable Approach to ARPA Implementation

Louisville's work allocating its \$388 million in funding from ARPA's SLFRF program is rooted in its Build Back, Together (B3T), a framework for creating an equitable recovery from the pandemic. Leaders in Louisville recognized that \$388 million is a great deal of money, but it is not nearly enough to solve every challenge facing the city. Along with the Metro Council, Louisville began applying it to critical priorities, recognizing this influx of money served as a rare opportunity to turn investments it had hoped to make "someday" into "today," guided by values of efficiency, accountability, equity, and transparency.

Louisville focused its initial rounds of ARPA investments of approximately \$30 million on the immediate and urgent challenges of COVID-19-related health needs; the housing, food and utility instability experienced by vulnerable residents; and economic recovery.

A second round of funding was divided chiefly among public safety, homelessness and affordable housing, and premium pay for public employees. This included \$42.6 million for public safety initiatives, \$89 million for homelessness and affordable housing initiatives, and \$21 million to provide premium pay across Metro Government employees, a well-deserved payment to recognize the work public safety, public health, and other essential workers during the pandemic.

Louisville is currently in the process of approving its fourth round of funding to support youth and child care initiatives, investments in parks and pools, and the reopening of library branches. Advancing equity has been the lynchpin for all the noted investments.

Equity demands deliberate acts to create it, just as deliberate acts were taken to create the systemic racism Louisville is working to conquer. To that end, Louisville has taken several deliberate steps to use an equity lens through which it determines how it distributes the funds that it has received from the ARPA.

First, Louisville has an extensive list of questions related to equity in its Request for Applications process. These include:

- How was the proposal designed with racial equity in mind?
- Which (protected class(es) / racial or social / historically underserved, marginalized, or adversely affected) groups will be most affected by and concerned with the proposal?
- Does this proposal address the root cause of racism or inequity?
- How will the proposal promote equitable outcomes?
- How will the impact of this proposal on historically underserved, marginalized, or adversely affected groups be documented and evaluated?
- How will you address any impacts (positive, negative, or unintended) on racial equity?
- Have you partnered with any women-owned or minority associations, organizations, or businesses, or advocates for the poor to address this proposal?

Louisville also developed an "Equity Review" for each project proposal, providing Louisville Metro Council with a holistic view of how equity is prioritized and addressed. When the city evaluates these proposals, 25 percent is weighted on equity. Additionally, the city's Chief Equity Officer is a part of the team that evaluates all proposals.

The city's ARPA SLFRF funding strategy demonstrates how equity has been integrated as a key priority:

- The city has spent funding to address the COVID-19 pandemic, with a special focus of targeted messaging and grassroots activities (vaccines & testing) targeted at Brown and Black communities.
- The city historically struggled to afford quality permanent housing. It has spent \$40 million to build affordable housing units; \$32 million for permanent supportive housing; \$4 million for down payment assistance; and \$4 million in home repair to help people stay in their homes.

- With the recent increase in gun violence, the African community has been hardest hit. Using ARPA dollars, the city has spent \$15.8 million to expand its Office for Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods' violence deterrence and prevention programs.
- To continue to build trust between its police department and the communities they serve, Louisville is using \$17.5 million to implement public safety reforms.

Equity Framework

The city of Louisville has leveraged several frameworks to assist with promoting equity through ARPA/SLFRF implementation: (i) Build Back, Together (B3T) Initiative; (ii) Mayor's plan for Advancing Racial Equity; A Path Forward; and (iii) Louisville Health Equity Action Plan

Equity-Focused Programs

- **Vaccine Distribution:** The city allocated \$1,485,117.07 of ARPA funding for this purpose (plus additional awards to several sub-recipients). This project includes a wide range of vaccination activities, including mobile missions staffed by city employees and through a large network of community partners. The missions are scheduled based on community requests, vaccination rates, case counts, and serving high-risk populations, including providing in-home vaccinations to those who can't leave their homes. Equity was a major factor in determining the locations of mobile vaccine missions. As vaccines became more widely available early last year, Louisville created a diverse Vaccine Distribution Task Force to coordinate and facilitate implementation, communication, administration, and reporting vaccinations in the city – with a focus on equity. The city, led by Louisville Metro Public Health and Wellness, and with support from across Metro and many compassionate partners — established LouVax, the state's first mass vaccination site for COVID-19 vaccines. Within the tiers of groups eligible for vaccines in the phased rollout, Louisville worked to ensure that equity was a focus in getting shots into arms. When the Broadbent site closed, the city transitioned to community-based clinics and visits to homebound individuals. Again, equity was a major factor in determining the locations of mobile vaccine missions. From the beginning of the vaccine rollout, Louisville heeded the concerns that African American residents may be hesitant to accept the vaccine because of distrust of the healthcare system, stemming from what officials describe as terrible moments in history like the Tuskegee study — or their own lived experiences. Unfortunately, Louisville continued to see disparities in vaccinations in majority African American neighborhoods. The city continues to focus on this, with intentionality, and pledges that lack of access to vaccines or information will never be the reason for the noted disparities.
- **Household Stability - Court Eviction Diversion Program:** The city allocated \$10,000,000 of ARPA funds to this purpose. This program supports tenants who are facing an eviction for nonpayment of rent due to a COVID-related loss of income. The program provides financial assistance to cover both past due rent and future rent for households below 80% of area median income. To date, roughly 65% of tenant recipients of ARPA funding through Court Eviction Diversion reside in West Louisville (defined here as areas west of I – 65 and north of I – 265). Historically, West Louisville has experienced higher rates of disinvestment and is included in Louisville's qualified census tract (QCT) designations. While these program policies are not expressly targeted to specific areas of Louisville, residents of West Louisville represent the majority of funds awarded as of August 16, 2021. These programs are not targeted toward any racial or ethnic group. However, because African American communities have long experienced economic disenfranchisement through a history of racially motivated policies, these communities represent a disproportionate number of low-income residents, and are therefore more likely to benefit from these income targeted programs.
- **Household Stability – Harm Reduction Recovery Housing Project:** The city allocated \$400,000 of ARPA funds to this purpose. The city issued an RFP to identify a qualified vendor to operate a pilot program providing harm reduction recovery housing to reduce the risk of overdose among unhoused residents with substance use disorders. The project gives preference to applicants who can demonstrate a commitment to equity, requires applicants to demonstrate prior work advancing equity, includes an equity test and equity analysis as part of the evaluation criteria.

- **Small Businesses:** The city allocated \$100,000 of ARPA funds to this purpose. The Office for Globalization contracted with the Small Business Development Center to provide technical assistance to small business owners, which integrates a “train the trainer” model. The Office for Globalization has had a higher level of interaction with immigrant-owned businesses during the pandemic, and through that interaction learned that even immigrant-owned businesses who managed to apply were unable to secure grants or to effectively invest the financial relief that directly addressed immediate need in a sustainable way. The train-the-trainer model at the heart of the program will assist businesses to ramp up safe operation as the community continues opening and prepare them for potential opportunities that might arise in the future.

Short & Long-Term Impacts

The city is achieving many positive short- and long-term impacts as a result of its ARPA strategy. As of August 2021, the Court Eviction Diversion Program has served 137 households of which 75 are Black or African American, 107 have an Area Median Income (AMI) that is less than 30%, and 77 are households where the primary applicant is female. Ultimately, the noted project has helped these individuals remain housed and avoid homelessness both in the short-term and long-term.

The intended outcomes of the Harm Reduction Recovery Housing Project are to help unhoused residents with substance use disorders achieve and maintain housing stability by placing them into subsidized community-based housing and providing them with ongoing support services.

In addition, the intended benefit of the Small Business Assistance program is to build long term capacity and skills in the multicultural businesses community to recover from the pandemic and remain in business long-term.

Additional Resources

To support its public health response, Louisville Metro has focused its vaccination efforts on immigrant communities, communities who speak English as a second language, and zip codes with the lowest vaccination percentages, which correlate to lower socio-economic status. The Department of Public Health continues to partner with community organizations representing and working with these communities and seeking input from these groups on new opportunities to reach those who may experience barriers to vaccination and opportunities to remain healthy during the pandemic. Partners included organizations led by people of color, refugees, and members of the LGBTQ community.

The Centers for Disease Control awarded the Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness (LMPHW) a \$4.2 million Health Disparities grant, which allowed an expansion of the Center for Health Equity to support data collection and analysis, community outreach policy and equity work related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Center is specifically reaching out to businesses it has worked with in the past that may not be accessing traditional vaccination resources to make them aware of services provided by Louisville Metro’s COVID response efforts. The Department of Public Health is using the resources available to the agency to make the public aware of these services and resources, including media and communications outlets, community, and organizational partner networks, and connecting residents to services through established programs and departments.

Nonprofit Engagement

As part of its vaccine distribution project, Louisville partnered with the Louisville Urban League, Black faith leaders and healthcare leaders, among others, to share positive messaging about getting vaccinated. The city provided grants to nonprofits serving minority, immigrant and refugee communities to host listening sessions where residents could ask questions. The city also funded mobile vaccine clinics.

Local service providers established an active website, stopmyeviction.org, which includes information on Court Eviction Diversion Program and other resources. However, officials in the Louisville Metro Government (LMG) understands that not all residents will have the same access to technology. Louisville Metro has therefore made every effort to bridge the digital divide and keep these programs accessible for all residents.

The city has also partnered with various community agencies, including the Louisville Urban League and Neighborhood Places, to provide access to computer and technical support with the application. Furthermore, a partnering community agency, the Legal Aid Society, is present during all virtual eviction hearings to provide legal support in court and help residents connect with available programs.

LMG has awarded grants to local nonprofits including the See Forward Ministries Corporation, the Americana World Community Center, and the Somali Community of Louisville Inc. who already provide services to engage with hard-to-reach minority and immigrant communities most impacted by the pandemic. LMG has also awarded grants to local organizations to host listening sessions with resident participation and partnered with local churches and Black civic organizations to coordinate vaccination sites.

Testimonials

“I spent four or five years working to get my own home, and I was finally able to do it with my persistence and the help of the Down Payment Assistance Program. The program is a blessing, and helped make owning a home a reality for me.” - LaQuita Dorsey, who just closed on a house with the help of DPA funds

Lessons Learned

Officials in Louisville observe that even before the pandemic arrived in Louisville, the city worked to understand the tragedy of racial health disparities, and this proved to be of vital importance. The city joined the fight against COVID-19 knowing that the difference in life expectancy for Louisvillians who live near Shawnee Park is about 12 years fewer than Louisvillians who live near Tom Sawyer Park. The noted data was from the city’s last Health Equity Report, before the pandemic. Louisville has learned that truly building racial equity requires intentionality. It is critical to put the processes in place, drill it into your systems, and track your outcomes. That’s what Louisville set out to do in response to COVID-19 starting back in early 2020.

Funds From Other Sources

The City of Louisville is raising additional funds from a local foundation that is providing loans to two recipients of ARPA SLFRF funds. These organizations do not have sufficient cash flow to “front” project expenses and later be reimbursed from ARPA funds, and the noted funding is allowing them to participate as meaningful partners in the city’s ARPA strategy.

Other Government Partners

The Centers for Disease Control awarded the Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness (LMPHW) a \$4.2 million Health Disparities grant, which allowed an expansion of the Center for Health Equity to support data collection and analysis, community outreach policy, and equity work related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Center plays a key role in advancing Louisville’s public health initiatives funded through ARPA.

LMG also partnered with the CDC and National Institutes for Health on the Say Yes! COVID Test initiative, which provided 500,000 rapid home test kits to residents of ZIP codes where rates of COVID were highest, vaccination rates were lowest, including many with majorities of Black and Brown residents.

16. Madison, WI Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway

Total SLFRF Allocation: \$47,197,155

Equitable Approach to ARPA Implementation

Equity is a core city value in Madison, and the city has made racial equity and social justice a key element of its planning and budgeting processes. The five funding priorities the City of Madison has chosen for ARPA SLFRF community investments (violence prevention and youth engagement, homelessness support, affordable housing, emerging needs, and economic development) aim to directly serve residents who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), people living with lower incomes, and people who are otherwise marginalized. Economic and racial equity will be prioritized as a goal by targeting traditionally marginalized residents. The intended outcomes of the city's ARPA SLFRF funded projects are closing gaps, reaching universal levels of service, and disaggregating progress by race, ethnicity, and other equity dimensions.

As examples of projects that prioritize racial equity and social justice, the city funded youth engagement projects that will target low-income youth and youth of color who have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and face multiple barriers. The focus of the noted projects is on youth living in Madison's most challenged neighborhoods and youth who have been traditionally excluded due to the current economic situation.

In addition, the city is funding homelessness programs in Madison that target people experiencing housing insecurity - a group that is disproportionately represented by men and people of color. According to the most recent 2021 Point in Time (PIT) Count, 70% of those staying in emergency shelters or in unsheltered locations were single men. Nearly 50% of those men identified as Black or African American (34%), Hispanic/Latino (6%) or other races (6%). A permanent men's shelter, funded in part with SLFRF funds, would provide safe overnight accommodations and other critical support services.

The city is also investing in economic development programs, such as BizReady, Commercial Ownership Assistance, and the Madison Pop-Up shop to support entrepreneurs of color and other groups, such as low-income individuals, LGBTQ+ individuals, women, immigrants, veterans, people with disabilities and people with limited English proficiency. To ensure target populations are aware of programs funded by SLFRF, the city's staff plan to work extensively with individuals and organizations that serve marginalized groups to help residents and businesses learn about these opportunities.

To support the successful implementation of the noted program, the city will also conduct broad outreach campaigns using multiple platforms, including social media. The city will also endeavor to address differences in levels of access to benefits and services across groups, and administrative requirements that result in disparities in individuals' ability to complete applications or meet eligibility criteria. For example, the City of Madison Department of Civil Rights will provide translations and interpretation services for those with language barriers and provide materials and resources in multiple forms (i.e. online, paper, person-to-person) for those who may not have access to the internet or have disabilities.

Equity Framework

The city's longstanding Racial Equity & Social Justice Initiative (RESJI) provides that every decision made, policy written, or function performed has racial equity and social justice as its core principles. The city has pre-existing tools developed by RESJI for conducting equity analyses and incorporating equity into program design. Several ARPA SLFRF projects are currently using RESJI tools to develop implementation plans. In addition, the city had formed several cross-functional Recovery Teams that had been meeting for months prior to the release of ARPA SLFRF. These teams had a deep understanding of community needs and had developed program and project ideas for community recovery before ARPA/SLFRF funding was available. The city was able to leverage these teams to quickly develop a plan for ARPA SLFRF funding.

Equity-Focused Programs

- **Unsheltered Homeless Support:** About \$3.5 million of the city’s ARPA funds will be used to support parallel strategies to provide options for homeless persons who are unwilling, or unable, to use congregate shelter facilities. While it is not new for individuals to forego shelter services, additional concerns raised by COVID-19 have increased the number of people reluctant to use that resource. Though the numbers of unsheltered homeless vary throughout the year, they can exceed 100 people at any given time. ARPA funds will support two specific projects. About \$2 million will go toward the establishment of an urban campground on city-owned land on Madison’s southeast side. Funds will finance the capital costs associated with public improvements, purchase of heated cabins and related amenities, and operational costs related to property management and on-site support service functions. The campground will support no more than 30 persons at one time with turnover expected as people are connected to housing. The second project ARPA funds will support is the provision of temporary shelter at a local hotel property. ARPA funds will be used to secure 35 rooms at the property and to pay for meals and on-site support services. This arrangement, which can support 40-45 people at any given time, is expected to end on or about June 30th. The city has been providing these services since November 2021 and has served dozens of residents experiencing homelessness have access to safe and legal alternatives for shelter.
- **Small Business Equity and Recovery:** Small businesses, especially those owned by people of color, have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many small businesses face the real prospect of permanently closing because of the current pandemic and although some Federal and State programs exist to help small business owners during this time, not all small business owners have been able to take advantage of these programs and the programs have not provided enough relief to all small business owners. The Small Business Equity & Recovery (SBER) Program will provide financial assistance to small businesses, businesses owned by historically marginalized individuals and organizations or programs that support small businesses. The city is developing a suite of programs under the SBER umbrella, including pop-up shops, commercial ownership assistance, a façade grant program, and a “biz ready” program. These programs are under development with a plan to start in the summer and fall of 2022. This program will provide a path toward equitable prosperity, especially within communities of color, by providing tools and support to diverse entrepreneurs to prepare for a post-COVID economy and can also improve physical access in the city using public funds to remove long standing barriers to accessibility.
- **Neighborhood Business District Support:** COVID-19 continues to still have a devastating impact on small, women and minority businesses and neighborhood business districts who support these businesses. Many of these organizations went above and beyond to help the community and businesses during the pandemic by assisting the community with immediate needs, helping small businesses access financial support, and taking steps to educate and assist businesses in reopening. Local chambers, organizations and neighborhood business districts have lost revenue due to emergency orders, decrease in fundraising opportunities, and increase in demand. Many chambers, for example, helped hundreds of businesses who were not a part of their membership, waived fees for their members and helped translate for free. Other organizations expanded their work to help the business community sustain or try to survive during the pandemic. Many organizations had to pivot to stay afloat themselves while trying to help businesses in their communities. This project will help provide funds to neighborhood business districts, organizations, and chambers to continue their important work by building their capacity to assist businesses as they recover from the pandemic. It is also the goal of the city to help support organizations run by or serving historically disadvantaged individuals that have not been fully active within some of these neighborhood districts in the past. This project is currently under development and is expected to launch in the fall of 2022. The expected outcomes are serving women and minority owned businesses.
- **Services to Immigrant Households:** This project addresses the need to support programming, services, and outreach for members of the community who are immigrants. The pandemic has had a profound impact on immigrant residents, particularly around employment and housing. An RFP to select community providers was released earlier this year, and the city is in the process of contracting with selected community organizations. Though services have not yet started, funding will support community partners and provide the means to deliver direct assistance to immigrant residents and families as they cope with the consequences of COVID-19.

Short & Long-Term Impacts

Short-term goals, that the City of Madison expects to achieve with ARPA funds, include providing immediate response and support to residents most directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes supporting residents who are immigrants, providing alternatives to congregate shelters for residents who are experiencing homelessness, and supporting violence prevention initiatives for youth. Long-term goals include investing in capital projects to address affordable housing and homelessness and building a strong foundation for a more resilient local economy.

Additional Resources

The city has benefitted from technical assistance and other resources provided by agencies such as the Bloomberg Cities Network Federal Assistance e311 and the Government Finance Officers Association.

Nonprofit Engagement

When carrying out the project to provide services to immigrant residents, the city's Community Development Division conducted a survey of community providers to understand the most pressing needs of immigrant households. This engagement informed the application process and allowed the city to select the most relevant expenditure categories for the program.

Lessons Learned

Officials in Madison leveraged existing processes and systems to develop plans for ARPA SLFRF funds. For example, funding proposals were developed through pre-existing Recovery Teams. Additionally, staff are utilizing existing racial equity and social justice initiative (RESJI) analysis tools to develop programs. By using existing tools and procedures, the city is not reinventing the wheel every time they need to stand up a program, which allows the city to move quickly on projects.

Other Government Partners

The city developed its plan for ARPA SLFRF funds internally. However, there are several projects that have funding from county, state, and federal sources. For example, the Public Market project includes city ARPA SLFRF funds and State of Wisconsin Neighborhood Investment Funds.

17. Mount Vernon, NY Mayor Shawyn Patterson-Howard

Total SLFRF Allocation: \$41,108,657

Equitable Approach to ARPA Implementation

Mount Vernon is one of the poorest communities in one of the richest counties in the United States, Westchester County. To that end, the ARPA SLFRF funds have been crucial in upgrading crumbling sewer and wastewater infrastructure, boosting MWBE initiatives to create jobs, opening an innovative and first of its kind Wellness Division and Precinct comprised of social workers, police credible messengers, youth/homeless outreach staff, and addiction counselors.

These programs and projects have been strategic in righting the historic divestment in communities of color, while strengthening the city's infrastructure, creating jobs and improving the social and emotional health of those who have interacted with the programs.

Equity Framework

The City of Mount Vernon did not have a specific framework for equity, but since Mayor Patterson-Howard took office in 2020 she has worked to create a just city that represents all the residents. Mount Vernon's population is 86% Black and Hispanic and has dealt with decades of disinvestment and shrinking funding. Mayor Patterson-Howard, a recent member of the Mayors Institute on City Design, has taken that historical challenge and used it to leverage ARPA funding to launch violence prevention, economic development, and economic justice programs.

Equity-Focused Programs

- **Guaranteed Income:** The City of Mount Vernon has allocated \$1,650,000 in SLFRF funds to launch a guaranteed income pilot to provide 200 families with \$500 a month – the first of its type in Westchester County. The program will go toward single parents, millennials, senior citizens, and those making between 30% and 80% Area Median Income (AMI) in Westchester County.
- **Violence Prevention:** The city has allocated \$1,750,000 in SLFRF funds to open a Wellness Precinct/Center to help with the co-response team that is composed of police, social workers, credible messengers, violence interrupters, youth/homeless outreach staff and addiction peer counselors. Other initiatives include purchasing body cameras for officers to increase accountability and to align with police reform efforts, as well as installing cameras in hotspot areas to help deter and solve potential crime. The city is also purchasing a Mobile Command Center which will allow the flexibility of providing co-response and standing up a mobile wellness resource center throughout the community.

Short & Long-Term Impacts

The city's ARPA SLFRF funded projects are expected to stabilize the city's financial status, provide residents with jobs and community resources, help fix long-standing sewer and wastewater infrastructure disinvestment in historically black communities, and enable the upgrading of sanitation equipment and operations in the city. Additionally, funding from the ARPA SLFRF will enable more comprehensive safety for the community through upgrades in public safety and increase the technology upgrades to close the digital divide in the community, particularly for the 35% of residents in Mount Vernon who have minimal access to the internet.

Additional Resources

The City of Mount Vernon looked at the efforts of other cities across the country to identify best practices used to develop their ARPA SLFRF strategy. The city also launched a community survey to gather input on how residents wanted to see ARPA and SLFRF funds spent. Mount Vernon also worked with the U.S. Conference of Mayors, National League of Cities, the New York State Conference of Mayors, and additional elected officials for strategies to maximize the impact of these funds.

In addition, leaders in Mount Vernon took advantage of leveraging other funding sources to elevate the level of services needed to fix some of its larger projects. For example, the city's aging sewer and wastewater lines have created an environmental crisis. The city worked with the National Wildlife Foundation and NRDC to advocate on the state and federal level for more funding for sewer

and water infrastructure. This month, the Governor of New York announced \$150 million dollars for the replacement and repair of sewers on top of \$7 million used from ARPA and \$3 million from federal appropriations requests.

Nonprofit Engagement

The City of Mount Vernon engaged with the Guidance Center of Westchester, CLUSTER, Mount Vernon Neighborhood Health Center, Mayors for Guaranteed Income, and others when developing its plan to utilize and enhance the ARPA SLFRF money. These partnerships have been greatly beneficial and allowed the city to expand its capacity.

Testimonials

“Thank God and President Biden, and Congress for passing this historic act – Dolores Mack, Mount Vernon Resident”

Lessons Learned

Officials in Mount Vernon advise leaders to get involved early with the community to understand their needs, create a budget and provide with updates to the community on implementation, when devising an ARPA strategy.

Other Government Partners

Mount Vernon worked with its City Council, as well as with federal, state, and county partners in developing its ARPA strategy.

18. New Bedford, MA Mayor Jon Mitchell

Total SLFRF Allocation: \$64,729,754

Equitable Approach to ARPA Implementation

Most of the City of New Bedford is in a HUD-designated Qualified Census Tract. The median income of the city meets the Treasury's guidelines for "disproportionately impacted," and the city has relatively large non-white and immigrant populations. As such, the city contends that simply by investing in the city and abiding by United States Treasury Department guidelines the city is working to benefit underserved and underrepresented communities.

Most of the city's investments are in the "built environment" of the city. New Bedford is a "post-industrial" city in Massachusetts that has many vacant and blighted properties caused by industrial dislocation and several decades of disinvestment. These properties are often contaminated or feature historically significant architecture, making them particularly expensive to renovate or repurpose. Many of the city's investments are geared toward addressing the physical legacy of this historical disinvestment, which has health, crime, and quality of life implications for neighborhoods throughout the city's Qualified Census Tracts. The end use of many of the repurposed properties will result in the increased ability to meet basic needs, such as affordable housing and childcare.

For public solicitations for which there will be a selection process, the city has made equity considerations part of the evaluative criteria for ARPA funded projects. The considerations include the demographics of the population served, whether there are historically underserved, marginalized, or adversely affected groups that applicants intend to serve, and the extent to which applying organizations are led by or help an underserved or disadvantaged population. Furthermore, the city is forming review committees that reflect the representation of the community.

Equity Framework

The city relied on the PolicyLink report "10 Priorities for Advancing Racial Equity Through the American Rescue Plan: A Guide for City and County Policymakers" as an equity framework to guide its ARPA strategy.

Equity-Focused Programs

The city is funding several projects that advance equity including the construction of new childcare facilities, the creation of new affordable housing units, and improvements to open spaces. The improvements to open spaces are designed to address the social determinants of health and advance environmental justice goals, by increasing the number of free outdoor recreation opportunities, decontaminating polluted sites, improving outdoor air quality, and making progress on green infrastructure projects meant to limit the impacts of sea level rise. These investments will be spread throughout the city and will improve quality of life in low income and minority neighborhoods.

Short & Long-Term Impacts

By focusing on the built environment, the city is working to ensure that ARPA-funded projects have long-term benefits for generations to come. However, the city is using some short-term funding to focus on the public health crisis and to help small businesses impacted by the pandemic, which includes many minority-owned businesses, particularly in the International Marketplace neighborhood of the city.

Additional Resources

The city has informed the development of ARPA projects guided by the city's many strategic plans, which have been produced with extensive community engagement, outside experts, and consultants. New Bedford also hosted public outreach and community forums in the summer and fall of 2021 and released a public survey which drew more than 500 responses to guide its ARPA strategy.

Nonprofit Engagement

New Bedford is partnering with organizations such as the New Bedford Community Economic Development Center (CEDC), which serves a predominantly minority and non-English speaking population, to make sure that hard to reach populations are aware of funding opportunities. The city is also partnering with the CEDC to provide translated versions of applications.

Lessons Learned

Officials in New Bedford advise other leaders to enable broad-based public health and economic benefits by focusing on the intersection of the values of racial and environmental justice.

Funding From Other Sources

New Bedford is supporting the completion of Abolition Row Park, which is being developed on a blighted corner lot in the city's downtown and is adjacent to many sites that were important to New Bedford's anti-slavery movement and the Underground Railroad. This park is being supported by a mix of city, state, and federal funds. Large capital projects supported by ARPA often require matching funds, which come from a mix of private sector investments and private philanthropy.

19. Providence, RI Mayor Jorge Elorza

Total SLFRF Allocation: \$131,373,965

Equitable Approach to ARPA Implementation

The City of Providence empaneled the COVID-19 Recovery and Resiliency Task Force to provide guidance and make recommendations to the city government as recovery planning efforts get underway in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and provide critical insights to balance a long and short term equitable and impactful deployment of stimulus relief funds. The members of the Task Force included the Mayor (or his designee), members of the City Council, and representatives from: community philanthropy organizations, stakeholders in Providence's business community as well as from arts, culture, and tourism industries, leaders from community-based organizations, leaders from the city's youth and workforce development departments and representatives from the environmental community.

The Task Force met weekly during a 90-day period to oversee a robust community engagement strategy for public input that included a broad range of constituents across the city to provide their recommendations on how to allocate remaining ARPA funds. The Task Force published a report of their findings in November 2021, identifying the highest priority for deploying funds as making every spending decision through the lens of racial equity, centering not just those hardest hit by COVID-19 but those who have been disenfranchised by structural and historic racism and discrimination. In addition to empaneling the Task Force, the city conducted a robust multi-lingual 90-day community engagement process that directly engaged over 1,500 Providence residents, business owners and community members to provide input on how ARPA funds should be invested through surveys, community meetings, and direct door-knocking in hard-hit ZIP codes.

Equity-Focused Programs

- **Anti-violence Strategy:** One prominent example of a program promoting equity among underserved and underrepresented communities that was funded by ARPA/SLFRF funds was the Providence Anti-Violence Strategy. The city's robust, three-pronged anti-violence strategy was intended to address root causes of violence by providing critical support, skills, and opportunities for young people in Providence. As part of the comprehensive approach, the Nonviolence Institute was selected through a request for proposals process to manage a citywide nonviolence training initiative for Providence residents, intended to enhance participants' conflict resolution skills and proactively identify interpersonal conflicts between individuals and groups at risk of escalating to violence. Through this partnership, the Nonviolence Institute is conducting two types of trainings, one targeted at youth and another open to adults.
- **Mentor Rhode Island:** The organization Mentor Rhode Island led the city's youth mentorship programming. Mentor Rhode Island centered their efforts on organizations that focus on transitional years, including the transition from elementary and middle school to higher grades, older teenagers, and young adults, and on areas of the city where programs do not currently exist. As the third piece of the city's comprehensive approach to anti-violence, the city expanded its summer youth jobs program to offer year-round opportunities. Through this program, partner agencies provide youth job opportunities, all with an earning wage of \$15 per hour. Organizations selected to expand youth job opportunities for this effort included: Reentry Campus Program, Federal Hill House WEX and Federal Hill House SL, Refugee Dream Center, Inspiring Minds, Comprehensive Community Action Program, Boys and Girls Club of Providence, Providence Housing Authority, and Community Action Partnership of Providence County.
- **Homelessness and Housing Intervention:** Providence adopted a collaborative approach to addressing homelessness and substance misuse for Providence's most vulnerable residents, which included a \$495,000 award to Crossroads Rhode Island to support a new citywide mobile diversion program for Providence residents experiencing unsheltered homelessness. Through this intervention initiative, Crossroads Rhode Island will assist individuals currently living in places not meant for human habitation to either regain permanent housing or enter a shelter or transitional housing program. Assistance can range from financial support for costs related to securing housing to referrals for mental and behavioral health supports. As the leading provider of housing and services for the homeless in the state, Crossroads Rhode Island has a proven track record of helping people find permanent housing through effective case management and other support

services. With this increased support, Crossroads and its community partners are able to expand diversion and intervention programs for individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness throughout the city.

- **Small Business Grants:** Small business grants and programs were another program framed through the equity lens that used ARPA funds. In October 2021, the City of Providence launched an online COVID-19 Small Business Grant Application, designed to provide microgrants to businesses throughout the City of Providence and support economic recovery from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 Small Business Grant Program offers grants of \$2,500 through an allocation of nearly \$7 million of federal American Rescue Plan relief dollars.

Short & Long-Term Impacts

In Providence, ARPA SLFRF-funded projects have made a deep community impact since the first round of funding was received by the city in the Spring of 2021. Many of the programs that were funded have brought better quality of life to disproportionately impacted populations, as well as improved physical and social and emotional health for the people that benefit from the programs. The funds were used to start bridging disparity gaps and brought access to services and programs to a larger group of residents.

Additional Resources

The City of Providence partnered with a wide variety of community partners to engage residents when deciding how to prioritize ARPA funding. Providence specifically established partnership with organizations that served residents in the two zip codes with the highest numbers of positive COVID cases. Those partners included: Dorcas International, Federal Hill House, Direct Action for Rights and Equality (DARE), Alliance of Rhode Island Southeast Asians for Education (ARISE), the Providence Coalition of Neighborhood Associations, Mentor Rhode Island. Additionally, the city offered \$25 gift cards to residents in the hardest hit zip codes to fill out the Rescue Plan funding survey and ensure that it received feedback from residents most impacted. Providence believes that this incentive is the primary reason behind why the two zip codes who filled out the most surveys were also the two most impacted zip codes in the city.

Nonprofit Engagement

When developing recommendations for how to allocate funding, the city partnered with four of the leading organizations of residents disproportionately impacted by COVID: The NAACP Providence, Latino Policy Institute, Direct Action for Rights and Equality (DARE) and Alliance of Rhode Island Southeast Asians for Education (ARISE). Other organizations also included United Way of RI, Reading is Fundamental, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Kids Count, and the Providence Housing Authority.

Testimonials

The Nonviolence Institute, which implemented the Anti-Violence Strategy work for youth and adult audiences, funded by ARPA for Providence, said the following: “Teaching nonviolence is a long-term solution to reducing violence by building safe spaces for healthy and healing conversations,” said Executive Director of the Nonviolence Institute Cedric Huntley. “The Nonviolence Institute has been providing these kinds of training for 20 years, focusing on the principles of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s nonviolence philosophy. Through nonviolence training, we can create understanding, relationships, friendship and forgiveness that can endure the next struggle - not as adversaries but as allies.”

Lessons Learned

Leaders in Providence observe that decisions driven by deep community engagement are critical to usage of ARPA funding. Public feedback is incredibly important and should be solicited through tools like multilingual community engagement surveys as well as meetings in different neighborhoods and settings to get a wide range of opinions from city residents. Cities should also think about how ARPA SLFRF funded projects address current inequities among residents, as well as address future inequities in the years to come.

Funding From Other Sources

Providence is matching ARPA funds with other federal and state funding sources and working with local philanthropy to continue or expand programs. For example, the city's direct cash assistance program is currently 100% philanthropically funded; the city is using ARPA to extend the program and is also reengaging philanthropy.

Other Government Partners

The city collaborated with the governor and federal delegation offices with respect to its ARPA strategy to maximize impact. The Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns was also a partner, which is a local organization that includes leadership from all 39 cities and towns in Rhode Island. Providence is also engaging with local and national experts on several interventions to ensure that it is creating opportunities that meet intended outcomes.

20. San Diego, CA Mayor Todd Gloria

Total SLFRF Allocation: \$299,714,755

Equitable Approach to ARPA Implementation

The City of San Diego received \$299.7 million in ARPA SLFRF funds. Most of these funds went toward revenue replacement, which allowed the city to maintain employment of city workers and keep service levels for libraries and parks and recreation at their existing levels. If this funding had not been available, it would have led to municipal worker layoffs and service cuts, which would have disproportionately impacted disadvantaged communities throughout the city.

Equity Framework

The City of San Diego created the Office of Race and Equity in fiscal year 2022 to ensure that all city services are delivered with an equity framework. When developing its ARPA SLFRF strategy, San Diego was able to deliver programs like Summer for All of Us in underserved communities, Small Business Grants focused on minority owned businesses, and many other programs to better deploy resources with equity in mind (instead of making budget cuts that would negatively impact disadvantaged communities). The city has also created an equity definition and is working to implement an equity budgeting toolkit, as part of a wider commitment to equity.

Equity-Focused Programs

- Revenue Replacement in fiscal year 2022: The use of \$120 million of ARPA funds for revenue replacement enabled San Diego to avoid cuts to libraries, parks and recreation programs, and public safety.
- People Assisting the Homeless (PATH) Coordinated Street Outreach Program: The allocation of \$1 million to expand the PATH program enabled the city to use a person-centered, neighborhood-based approach to cultivate trusting relationships with unsheltered residents and connect them to housing and services.
- Mayor Gloria’s “Summer for All of Us” Come Play Outside initiative: The allocation of \$400,000 ARPA funds to the “Summer for All of Us” initiative was designed to provide new summer opportunities for kids and their families to play outside safely in San Diego. From aquatics and adventure camps to Teen Nights and movies in the park, programming was made available between May and August 2021 at city libraries and sixteen Parks & Recreation community and aquatic centers in communities of concern. Come Play Outside also leveraged ARPA dollars with substantial funding by the County of San Diego, Price Philanthropies, and the San Diego Parks Foundation to make it possible.
- Workforce Partnership’s “Connect2Careers” (C2C) initiative: The allocation of \$1 million to support the city’s youth via the C2C initiative was focused on removing barriers to employment for at-risk youth by providing them with work-readiness training, internships, mentoring and jobs. Halfway through the year, C2C has already exceeded its goal of reaching 1,000 youth via the program.
- Small Business Grant initiative: The city Leveraged \$10 million in ARPA funding with a \$2 million philanthropic contribution to fund \$12 million in grants to small businesses and nonprofits that were focusing on communities of concern and underrepresented populations. In partnership with The San Diego Foundation, San Diego has distributed \$11,282,500 in grant funding. First, of the 1245 small businesses funded, 82.23% were BIPOC owned, with 274 identifying as Asian-Pacific Islander (18.10%), 472 Black/African American (31.18%), and 335 Hispanic (37.3%). In addition, 968 of the businesses were in the Promise Zone or community areas designated under the Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant program (65%). The criteria for the 166 nonprofits selected were based on populations served and the type of services provided. Therefore, the founding individual’s demographics were not a priority consideration. Priority categories included geographic data and distribution across sectors like arts, culture, food equity, senior services, mental health, youth support, and education. Approximately 46% of the grants went to nonprofits organized by people identifying as BIPOC.

Short & Long-Term Impacts

ARPA's SLFRF has had an immense impact on the city's budget, which will have long lasting impacts on the city's residents. San Diego's allocation has helped bring fiscal years 2022 and 2023 into balance allowing the city to ensure that service levels across city departments are not reduced. The COVID-19 pandemic had an immense impact on the city's tourism industry, which caused significant dislocations in the city's budget. In addition to serving as a budget stabilization vehicle, the city's use of ARPA funds also enabled it to invest in youth programming, small business support, workforce development, and a city council microgrant program focused on equitable investments in the most historically disadvantaged communities.

Nonprofit Engagement

The City of San Diego engaged with the County of San Diego, the San Diego Foundation, Price Philanthropies, and the San Diego Parks Foundation.

Funding From Other Sources

The City of San Diego partnered with the San Diego Foundation, San Diego Workforce Partnership, and Price Philanthropies. As noted above, the city leveraged \$10 million in ARPA funding with \$2 million of philanthropic contributions to fund a \$12 million grant program for small businesses and nonprofits that are focusing on communities of concern and underrepresented populations. In partnership with The San Diego Foundation, the city has distributed \$11,282,500 in grant funding as of the date of this case study.

The city supplemented its investment of \$400,000 of ARPA funds in Mayor Gloria's "Summer for All of Us" Come Play Outside initiative described above with substantial funding by the County of San Diego, Price Philanthropies, and the San Diego Parks Foundation.

Other Government Partners

The city collaborated with the County of San Diego on various ARPA initiatives.



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