

From: [Andrea Portillo-Knowles](#)
To: [Sabrina Lundy](#)
Cc: [Jasuara Castaneda](#); [Pamela Christian](#); [Ursula Deloa](#)
Subject: Re: Public Comments - Special City Council Agenda - 06-15-23
Date: Thursday, June 15, 2023 9:56:02 AM
Importance: High

This email originated from outside of the City's email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

I'm not sure if the deadline is 10am or 1pm as I received two different answers.

However, here is my public comment. Thank you.

"My name is Andrea Portillo, Executive Director of Richmond Main Street, Economic Development Commissioner, and I am here to speak about the importance of an equitable process in place for resource allocation, particularly the allocation of ARPA Funding and how the allocation of those funds are determined.

Over the past year and a half, our community has faced unprecedented challenges brought about by the pandemic. Many businesses have struggled to survive, and numerous organizations providing essential services to our residents have faced immense financial strain. As we slowly emerge from this crisis, it is crucial that we prioritize fairness and equity in the distribution of resources to aid in the recovery and revitalization of our city.

An equitable process ensures that the most vulnerable and marginalized businesses and organizations receive the support they desperately need. The pandemic has not affected everyone equally, and certain communities have borne a disproportionate burden. We must acknowledge these disparities and actively work towards rectifying them through targeted assistance and inclusive decision-making.

By establishing an equitable process, we can ensure that resources like ARPA funding are allocated based on need rather than privilege or influence. This requires a transparent and well-defined framework that considers factors such as the severity of economic impact, geographical location, and the diversity of business sectors affected."

Best,
Andrea

Andrea Portillo | Executive Director

[Richmond Main Street Initiative](#) *Revitalizing Historic Downtown Richmond*
[1600 Nevin Plaza, Richmond, CA 94801](#), in the Richmond Visitor Center at Richmond BART

E: director@richmondmainstreet.org | O: (510) 236-4049

From: [Jeannette Kortz](#)
To: [Eduardo Martinez](#); [Gayle McLaughlin](#); cesar_zapeda@ci.richmond.ca.us; [claudia jimenez](#); [Melvin Willis](#); [Doria Robinson](#); [Soheila Bana](#)
Cc: [City Clerk Dept User](#)
Subject: Special Meeting, 4:00, June 15th, 2023
Date: Thursday, June 15, 2023 9:49:51 AM

This email originated from outside of the City's email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

This email originated from outside of the City's email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

I am writing in support of an Integrated Shoreline Plan. The shoreline is an integrated ecosystem. Please read the following:

-Richmond needs a comprehensive inventory of toxins that exit along our shoreline that are detrimental to public health, and the health of the San Francisco Bay.

-We need a "greening" of the port.

-We need integrated restoration as opposed to a reuse plan to follow cleanup. This plan should utilize nature based strategies and can start with a "living shoreline" as opposed to hard engineering projects. Please see what the City of Hayward has done in regards to nature based shoreline adaption starting on page 87: https://www.hayward-ca.gov/sites/default/files/210510_Hayward%20Shoreline%20Adapatation%20Master%20Plan_Document_Pages.pdf

-An integrated shoreline plan brings together resource-rich and resource-poor areas. If you poison one part of the City, you poison all of us. Toxins have no boundaries.

-There are significant impacts to the health of residents because of sea level rise and groundwater intrusion. Please see Dr. Kristina Hill's, PhD, UC Berkeley report: <https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/64926/Hill-Richmond-City-Council-Feb-28-short-2023-PDF>

-Last, but not least, there should be no development on our shoreline. If development on the shoreline is desired, a significant setback must be considered. Affordable and mixed use housing should be built in the core of Richmond near public transportation, and where such housing will bring businesses to the downtown area and create jobs.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Kortz
Richmond Resident

From: [Sally Tobin](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept User](#)
Cc: [Eduardo Martinez](#); [Gayle McLaughlin](#); [Melvin Willis](#); [Claudia Jimenez](#); [Doria Robinson](#); [Cesar Zepeda](#); [Soheila Bana](#)
Subject: 1) Public Comments
Date: Thursday, June 15, 2023 9:54:10 AM

This email originated from outside of the City's email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

This email originated from outside of the City's email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

This e-mail is being sent as a comment for today's Special City Council Meeting on Setting Goals for Richmond:

I am delighted that Richmond is addressing goals for the future, and integrating a variety of goals is an excellent idea. In particular, developing goals that are derived from the input and needs of community members would be a wonderful achievement. In this note of support, I am going to suggest a few approaches that may be relevant to the creation of an integrated shoreline plan for entire city shoreline.

Shoreline Contributions to the Public Good

Richmond's abundant shoreline represents an opportunity for increased health and well-being for the public through outdoor recreation, through resilient shorelines, and through housing that enhances public values. An integrated approach might involve consideration of benefits to all Richmond residents. Goals for the shoreline might include recreation programs, safe (uncontaminated) housing for residents who might be able to build wealth through home ownership near the shoreline, and perhaps also a system or public transit to bring residents to the shoreline for recreation.

Sea level rise and Contamination

Richmond has an unfortunate legacy of contamination along the shoreline. Such contamination is common in environmental justice communities that often lack resources to prevent such problems or to clean them up. This toxic and in some cases, radioactive, heritage has probably been harmful to the health of Richmond residents both currently and in the past. However, the effects of such exposures take time to emerge. Now, because of climate change, sea level rise is going to affect shorelines around the globe. In the case of many environmental justice communities like Richmond, rising seas are going to mobilize contaminants. This will result in spreading harmful chemicals into nearby neighborhoods and simultaneously will wash harmful chemicals into the sea. It is important to anticipate these issues to avoid harming current and future residents and also to protect the contributions of San Francisco Bay and San Pablo Bay to commercial and sport fisheries through Bay nurseries, to name only a few of the ecological benefits of a productive and thriving biological system. Sea level rise also demands completely different approaches to cleaning up contamination. Caps are no longer an acceptable way to trap toxic and radioactive chemicals, given groundwater rise and sea level rise. The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) will need to completely remodel their approaches, and given the problems with the Zeneca site and recently released policy drafts, they are apparently extremely reluctant to develop alternative approaches. Richmond may need to push DTSC to fulfill its stated mission to protect the public and the environment.

Finally, I have the impression that there are a number of contaminated sites along the Richmond shoreline that are still in operation and have never been characterized. Such active sites are just as big a threat as those that have already been abandoned by their owners. Sea level rise will affect these sites profoundly. As part of developing goals for the Richmond shoreline, I would like to see passage of measures that require all shoreline businesses to carry out independent testing of their sites to develop a contamination assessment. Such information would then be used to develop plans to prevent adverse health effects for workers and Richmond residents (current and future), as well as to avoid washing contaminants out into the Bay waters.

Richmond needs an integrated shoreline plan!

Thank you for addressing the challenges that face Richmond today and in the future!

Best regards,
Sally

From: [wesley](#)
To: [Sabrina Lundy](#); [City Clerk Dept User](#)
Cc: [Ursula Deloa](#); [Jasuara Castaneda](#); [Pamela Christian](#)
Subject: Re: Public Comments - Special City Council Agenda - 06-15-23
Date: Thursday, June 15, 2023 9:48:10 AM
Attachments: [Fact Sheet ARPA SmallBusinesses.pdf](#)

This email originated from outside of the City's email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

This email originated from outside of the City's email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Sabrina,

Thank you for your message. Please see my comment below. Have a good day.

As you know, the City of Richmond received \$27.7M in ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funding to mitigate the adverse outcomes of the pandemic, such as economic hardships, lost revenues, and emerging public health concerns. It is well-documented that the pandemic had a profound impact on black and brown enterprises, both for-profit and non-profit, during the pandemic and post-pandemic. However, ARPA funds provide the City with a powerful vehicle to support those enterprises that not only navigated the pandemic, but also served the general community and the business community during the pandemic, such as CoBiz Richmond. Considering that respected organizations such as the [Government Finance Officers Association](#) and [the National League of Cities](#) strongly advocate for Cities to use ARPA funds to support small businesses and small business resource centers, it is urgent and imperative that the City establish an equitable, non-burdensome, and fair process for businesses and CBOs to 1) apply for ARPA funds, 2) receive an immediate determination, and 3) quick disbursement of fund. This cycle should not take any longer than 30 days. If we are going to advocate for equity in our City, then the City Council must prioritize establishing this process by no later than July 1, 2023. CoBiz is fighting to keep its doors open and looks to the City Council to fight for its stakeholders and anchor institutions that are positively contributing to the growth, development and wellness of the City, by establishing a process for businesses/organizations to secure ARPA funds. For many, these funds can serve as life-lines economically, entrepreneurially, communally - as it was designed for. We do not need to see any more businesses or organizations closing or moving out of our City, especially in Downtown Richmond. Thank you for your service and I will email each of the Council Members a fact sheet on how ARPA funds are supporting organizations like CoBiz in other cities throughout the country.

Respectfully,

Wesley Alexander
CEO | **CoBiz**
1503 Macdonald Avenue, Suite A
Richmond, CA 94801

(510) 309-7107 | wesley@cobizrichmond.com | www.cobizrichmond.com

On Thu, Jun 15, 2023 at 9:13 AM Sabrina Lundy <Sabrina_Lundy@ci.richmond.ca.us> wrote:

Hi Wesley, I am unable to see your comments, please resend the email with your comments typed in the body of the email.

Thank you,

Sabrina Lundy

Deputy City Clerk

City of Richmond, City Clerk's Office

450 Civic Center Plaza, Richmond, CA 94804

Direct: (510) 231-3048 | Office: (510) 620-6513 Option 9

Website: www.ci.richmond.ca.us/CityClerk

Please Note: This message is being sent on a public e-mail system and may be subject to disclosure pursuant to the California Public Records Act. The City Clerk's Department is prohibited from giving legal advice (per California Business and Professions Code 6125).

From: wesley <wesley@cobizrichmond.com>

Sent: Thursday, June 15, 2023 9:04 AM

To: City Clerk Dept User <CityClerkDept@ci.richmond.ca.us>

Subject: Public Comments - Special City Council Agenda - 06-15-23

This email originated from outside of the City's email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

This email originated from outside of the City's email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Wesley Alexander

CEO | **CoBiz**

1503 Macdonald Avenue, Suite A

Richmond, CA 94801

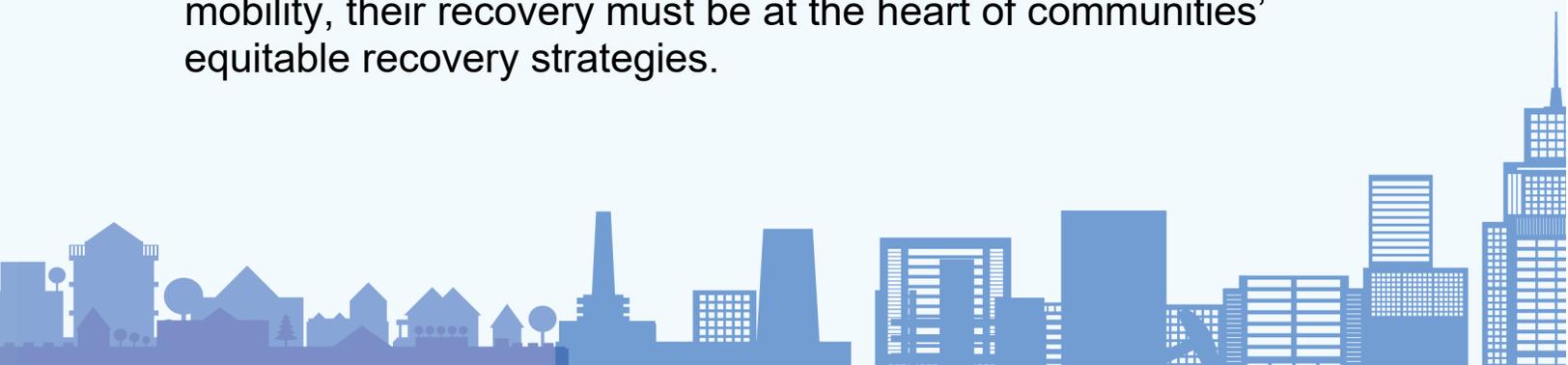
(510) 309-7107 | wesley@cobizrichmond.com | www.cobizrichmond.com

Leveraging ARPA Fiscal Recovery Funds to Support Small Businesses

Background

Small businesses are the lifeblood of the American economy, employing almost half of the nation's workforce in recent years and comprising over 99% of all firms. The unprecedented public health measures and altered consumer habits prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic have had an acute effect on these businesses. Establishments closed at a rate 25%-33% above normal levels during the pandemic's first year, with especially concentrated losses in high-contact industries like full-service dining and personal care, and small firms in general faced higher closure rates than large firms.

An average 25% of firms across states and sectors reported in July 2021 that the pandemic had a large negative effect on their business, while just 32% experienced little to no negative impact. Anecdotal and early statistical evidence suggest COVID-19 has been particularly burdensome for minority-owned businesses that faced greater difficulty accessing early rounds of aid in 2020 and suffered disproportionately severe losses through the end of last year. Given the role of small businesses as major employers and generators of economic mobility, their recovery must be at the heart of communities' equitable recovery strategies.



Fortunately, the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) offers leaders the resources they need to meet this challenge. In addition to [aid made directly available to businesses](#) like the Restaurant Revitalization Grant Fund, the federal government has appropriated local fiscal recovery funds that cities, towns and villages can use for an array of measures.² Several common policy approaches have emerged across plans adopted by municipal governments, offering a blueprint for those still deliberating how to effectively leverage this historic investment in support of small businesses. These categories of support are addressed in each of the sections that follow. [Review NLC's Principles for ARPA Implementation.](#)

Direct Financial Assistance

ARPA provides local governments with the flexibility to directly disburse funds to firms in response to public health needs and the negative economic effects of the pandemic. For many municipalities, this has come in the form of grants to cover COVID-19 mitigation costs or help recover from income loss. Some argue that at this phase in the pandemic, large direct transfers are less helpful than [smaller grants](#) that helps connect firms with navigators and other sources of support. Nonetheless, leaders have found grants to be a helpful lifeline for businesses in immediate need, a concern of potentially renewed salience with the rise of the delta variant. In [Hinesville, Georgia](#), for example, leaders allocated \$250,000 to help impacted businesses with diverse needs like paying rent or mortgages, meeting payroll obligations, and reducing risk of infection in their establishments.

Some cities have offered industry-specific aid by setting aside funds for businesses uniquely disadvantaged by COVID-19 protocols, such as those in the tourism, travel, and hospitality sectors which are specifically referenced in Treasury's Interim Final Rule. [Cincinnati](#) has demonstrated such an approach with its commitment of \$4 million in stimulus for bars and restaurants. This was paired with \$2 million to support the establishment of "streateries" that allow for socially distanced outdoor dining on roadways, simultaneously enriching the urban pedestrian experience.

Lending is an alternative that some municipalities have adopted in addition to, or in place of, grants.³ [Benton Harbor, Michigan](#), planned a two-pronged approach that complements over \$110,000 in grants with \$70,000 in loans from its ARPA allocation to help businesses persist through the pandemic. Local leaders can also

#NLCDelivers

choose to lend in a way that meets longer-term strategic economic development goals. [Duluth, Minnesota](#), invested \$1.5 million in a local fund that provides loans to incentivize business expansions and relocations, helping reduce barriers to new entrepreneurial activity and growth.

While the interventions addressed thus far are forward-looking, municipalities are also able to help alleviate public-sector-related expenses businesses have incurred over the course of the pandemic. [Pittsburgh](#) chose to forgive \$3.5 million in loans previously granted by a public agency, while [Minneapolis](#) established a fund to reimburse license fees owed since last March and reduce fees for closed businesses trying to reopen.

Generating Demand for Small Businesses

In addition to providing businesses with funding via loans or grants, municipalities can help firms meet their bottom line by generating demand for their goods and services. This demand can come from within government, as leaders can be more intentional about contracting with local entrepreneurs when delivering services and building supply chains. In [Phoenix](#), officials dedicated nearly \$10 million toward bolstering the Feed Phoenix Initiative. Food producers and meal preparers are reimbursed for locally sourced meals which are then distributed to Phoenix families, helping sustain small businesses' payroll while meeting the community's social needs.

Localities can also build consumer demand by incentivizing support for local businesses with ARPA funds. [Oswego, New York](#), pursued such a model with a "Buy One, Get One" program in which residents could pay \$25 to receive a \$50 gift card valid at local restaurants and retailers. Those businesses were not charged participation fees, making the city's investment a no-cost opportunity for entrepreneurs to increase foot-traffic and even attract new customers for the long-term.

Funding Third-party Intermediaries

Ensuring businesses are well-positioned to access the aid available to them and prepare for the future will help foster more resilient local economies. The [Brookings Institution](#) identifies technical assistance as a particularly valuable use of funds. In fact, it may even be advisable for local governments to focus on connecting firms to resources more than disbursing outright aid, although many cities have paired assistance with funding in a "both/and" approach to recovery. [Anchorage](#), for

#NLCDelivers

instance, allocated \$195,000 to a local non-profit to hire full-time outreach and technical assistance staff, while also sustaining several grant programs. Municipalities that enlist intermediaries in such efforts should be careful to select [trusted, established local navigators](#), especially when trying to reach underserved entrepreneurs who may have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and long-term disinvestment. [Buffalo](#) turned to a well-regarded, minority-focused small business resource center when developing its strategy to ensure a more inclusive response to COVID-19. The city's \$3.5 million grant will help the center not only provide technical assistance but also develop innovative concepts like a start-up incubator.

Building Business Infrastructure

A final major area of focus for many local leaders is strengthening the infrastructure necessary for small businesses to thrive. One of the most common interventions that can benefit entrepreneurs, especially the underserved, is the deployment of broadband.⁴ Changes in consumer habits preceded COVID-19, but adaptation to hybrid business practices became even more pressing given public health measures.

[Brownsville, Texas](#), is devoting \$19.5 million toward middle mile broadband⁵ to meet this need, which it plans to complement with \$250,000 in “digital inclusion” efforts that ensure businesses not only have Internet access but are also well-equipped to use it to their advantage.

An increasingly digital commercial landscape has not made brick-and-mortar establishments obsolete, however, and businesses can still benefit from help accessing and improving physical space. ARPA can be leveraged to provide businesses with [capital](#) to grow, from assisting individual firms with acquiring storefronts to redeveloping city-bought properties to serve as incubators for a range of firms. In [Seattle](#), for example, officials will spend \$2 million to support the purchase of affordable commercial space, reducing barriers for entrepreneurs who may otherwise lack the means to rent from private landlords in an expensive market.

Municipalities may also seek to improve the safety and aesthetics of the environments in which firms do business. In the most fundamental sense, this can involve physical rehabilitation of commercial spaces and corridors. [Madison, Wisconsin](#), will dedicate \$500,000 of its ARPA allocation to retail building improvement grants, helping businesses meet basic needs while devoting more of their revenue to other pressing priorities, like ongoing COVID-19 mitigation efforts and employee payroll.

#NLCDelivers

At the neighborhood level, local leaders can [bolster business districts](#) that create a sense of place and provide a valuable entrepreneurial network. While Treasury specifies that aid should go to business districts that existed before COVID-19 and can demonstrate pandemic-related effects, investments in short-term recovery can pave the way for future initiatives. [Alexandria, Virginia](#), is offering \$560,000 in matching funds for business associations to facilitate efforts that may substantiate the formation of districts in the future, advancing the city's long-term economic development.

Plans for neighborhood improvements should anticipate and redress potential disparities that may arise from ensuing changes in property values and prices for goods and services. Proactive policy solutions are necessary to protect long-established communities so that they can also benefit from ARPA-funded investments in their neighborhoods.

NLC Delivers for Cities, Towns and Villages

NLC has proudly advocated for municipal relief throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and continues working with federal officials to ensure localities have sufficient guidance and flexibility to effectively deploy ARPA funds.

Visit [NLC.org/Recovery](https://nlc.org/Recovery) for additional ARPA information and resources, including a [Local Action Tracker](#) compiling the innovative approaches leaders are taking to build more prosperous and inclusive futures.

If you have general questions about the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, please email the U.S. Department of Treasury at SLFRP@treasury.gov or call 844-529-9527.

The information contained here is not legal advice. It will be subject to change based on updates from the U.S. Department of the Treasury, and any recipients should confirm applicability to their specific situation.