Using the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to Meet our Highest Needs

Richmond, CA | Strategic Investment Plan

DECEMBER 2022

Image Source: Balazs Gardi/The Guardian

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Contents

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Focus Groups Organized with Community Leaders from:
- Office of Neighborhood Safety
- Rubicon Programs/Safe Organized Spaces (SOS)
- Literacy for Every Adult Program (LEAP)
- Reentry Success
- Literacy for Every Adult Program (LEAP)
- East Bay Center
- Building Blocks for Kids
- Family Justice
- YMCA
- Latina Center
- Nurturing Independence Through Artist Development (NIAD)
- Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN)
- Local Business Owners (coordinated with Lizeht Zepeda from Richmond BED)
- ABLE Community Development

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Introduction

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The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) provides local governments, including Richmond, with funds to address COVID-19 and support economic recovery.

Signed into law in March 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) provides Federal funding for states, counties, and cities to address both the public health crisis of COVID-19 and the pandemic's impact on the economy. The funding focuses on supporting the development of strong and equitable communities.

ARPA funds must be obligated by December 31, 2024 and must be expended by December 31, 2026.

While not an explicit requirement of the program, **ARPA is a one-time source of funding**, which means that the most suitable uses of ARPA funds are investment in projects or programs that do not require ongoing funding.

ARPA legislation outlines **four broad categories of eligible uses** for ARPA funds:

RESPONDING TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF COVID-19

REPLACING LOST PUBLIC SECTOR REVENUE

PROVIDING PREMIUM PAY FOR ESSENTIAL WORKERS

MAKING INVESTMENTS IN WATER, SEWER, AND BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE

ARPA funding primarily focuses on either addressing the immediate public health needs that emerged during the pandemic or mitigating the pandemic's adverse economic impacts.

Eligible uses for ARPA funds:

Responding to public health and economic impacts of COVID-19 | This can be a program or service related to identified impacts and designed to benefit impacted groups. Subcategories include:

- **Public health**, including COVID-19 mitigation and prevention, assistance with medical expenses, behavioral and mental health treatment, and preventing or responding to violence.

- **Assistance to households**, including food assistance, emergency housing, internet access or digital literacy, burials, home repair or weatherization, paid leave, workforce development services, financial services, affordable housing development, education, childcare, and direct cash assistance.

- **Assistance to small businesses**, including loans, grants, and technical assistance and other services.

- **Assistance to nonprofits**, including loans, grants, or technical assistance and other services.

- **Aid to impacted industries**, including financial support for payroll, and support for the maintenance and operations of existing facilities, technical assistance or other services, and COVID-19 mitigation or prevention.

- **Public sector capacity**, including increased capacity for public safety, public health, and human services staff; rehiring of public sector staff or providing other staff retention; and effective service delivery including program evaluation, community outreach, investments in technology, and costs related to COVID-19 response.

- **Assistance to disproportionately impacted households, businesses, and communities**, such as services to address health disparities, vouchers to help households relocate to neighborhoods with higher economic opportunity, investments in neighborhoods to promote improved health outcomes, remediation and removal of hazardous materials, improvements to vacant and abandoned properties, services or investments to address educational disparities, support for start-ups or expanding small businesses, and funding for rehabilitation or improvements to commercial properties.

However, local governments can also use the funding to invest in specific infrastructure needs, like expanding broadband access, or replace lost revenue.

Eligible uses for ARPA funds:

Replacing lost public sector revenue | To assist cities, the federal government allowed cities to take a maximum allowance of up to $10 million, allowing recipients to select between a standard amount of revenue loss or calculate revenue loss using the Treasury's formula, which compares actual revenue to a counterfactual trend. Funds can be used for any typical government services, including general administrative staff, services, and facilities, public safety services, road maintenance, infrastructure, and environmental remediation. The City of Richmond elected to calculate its revenue loss based on the Treasury formula and saw a 12.4% reduction in revenue, or $34.9K, which is otherwise greater than the City's allocation.

Premium pay for eligible workers | Cities can provide premium pay up to $13 per hour for eligible workers performing essential work, including:

- Health care, public health, mental health, social services, family or childcare, emergency response providers, medical testing, pharmacy, and other health and social services
- Grocery stores, restaurants, food production, and delivery
- Sanitation, maintenance, laundry, elections, and other critical services
- Biomedical research
- Transportation and warehousing
- Hotel and commercial lodging facilities used for COVID-19 mitigation and containment
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Investments in Water, Sewer, and Broadband Infrastructure | Cities can make investments to improve specific categories of infrastructure, including broadband, drinking water systems, and wastewater and sewer systems.

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INTRODUCTION

In 2022, the City of Richmond engaged a team, led by HR&A Advisors, to develop recommendations for how the city should allocate ARPA funds.

The following document outlines how the City can use of its American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to support COVID-19 recovery and address community needs.

This work began with a Community Needs Assessment, where HR&A and Contigo Partners ("the Consulting Team") led a community engagement process to help the City of Richmond ("the City") **understand how COVID-19 has impacted Richmond businesses and residents.** The Consulting Team used a range of activities to connect with representative and diverse populations, focusing on the engagement of diverse residents, businesses, community serving organizations and other key stakeholder groups to gather broad meaningful input to inform the City's COVID-19 recovery efforts and investments. The engagement efforts focused on reaching community members that may not typically attend public meetings but were most impacted by the economic and health impacts of the pandemic.

This process **identified community needs and priorities**. Input from the Community Needs Assessment, paired with a sociodemographic and market analysis, informed how the City should allocate ARPA funds. **Those recommendations begin on page 11.**

APRIL   JUNE   AUGUST   DECEMBER

LISTENING TOUR

COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS

ARPA INVESTMENT PLAN

The Community Needs Assessment identified priorities around job opportunities, economic and housing stability, mental health services, and access to information.

OUR JOBS AND BUSINESSES

Economic insecurity is at the root of Richmond resident's struggles, as without sufficient and sustainable income, people struggle to pay rent, afford medical care, and more. To make it through the pandemic, local small businesses needed a range of technical, economic, and social support that many felt unable to access, including difficulties accessing Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans.

OUR HEALTH

More people than ever sought mental health services as a result of the pandemic, including disconnected youth, overburdened parents, and isolated older adults. For some, this was their first time seeking mental health services, and they found a lack of culturally-competent and accessible mental health service providers.

OUR HOMES AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Rent burden has been high in Richmond since even before the pandemic and was made worse as the pandemic disrupted workers' ability to earn income. Housing insecurity is more pressing than ever, and many community members prioritized tenant assistance and rental assistance programs as their highest need.

OUR FAMILIES

Communities that struggle with accessing information often cannot overcome the barriers necessary to understand public announcements and connect with services. Access to broadband internet, technology and computer literacy further compounded issues of service access, particularly for youth and older adults.
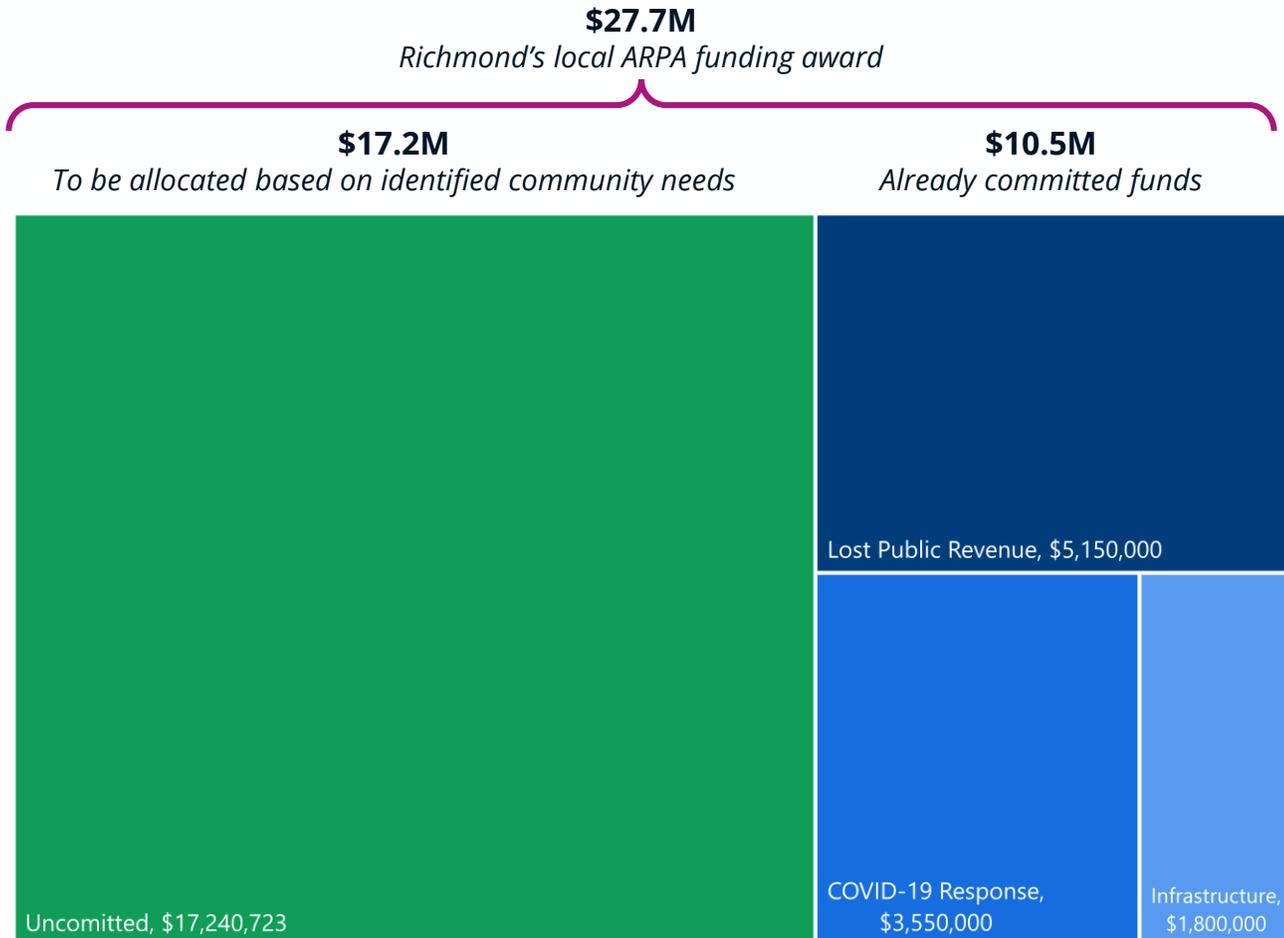
OUR CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

Richmond residents rely on their churches, neighborhoods, and community organizations to stay socially and economically connected, and need events to return safely and quickly. To do so, the City can increase support for nonprofit organizations already leading this work locally.

Richmond was awarded $27.7M in ARPA funds and has already set aside approximately $10.5M, leaving $17.2M in uncommitted funds.

$27.7M
Richmond's local ARPA funding award

$17.2M	**$10.5M**
To be allocated based on identified community needs	*Already committed funds*

Lost Public Revenue, $5,150,000

Uncomitted, $17,240,723

COVID-19 Response, $3,550,000

Infrastructure, $1,800,000

Use of Funds

ARPA is a one-time source of funding. Therefore, the most suitable use of ARPA funds is investment in projects or programs that do not require ongoing funding. Examples of suitable projects include:
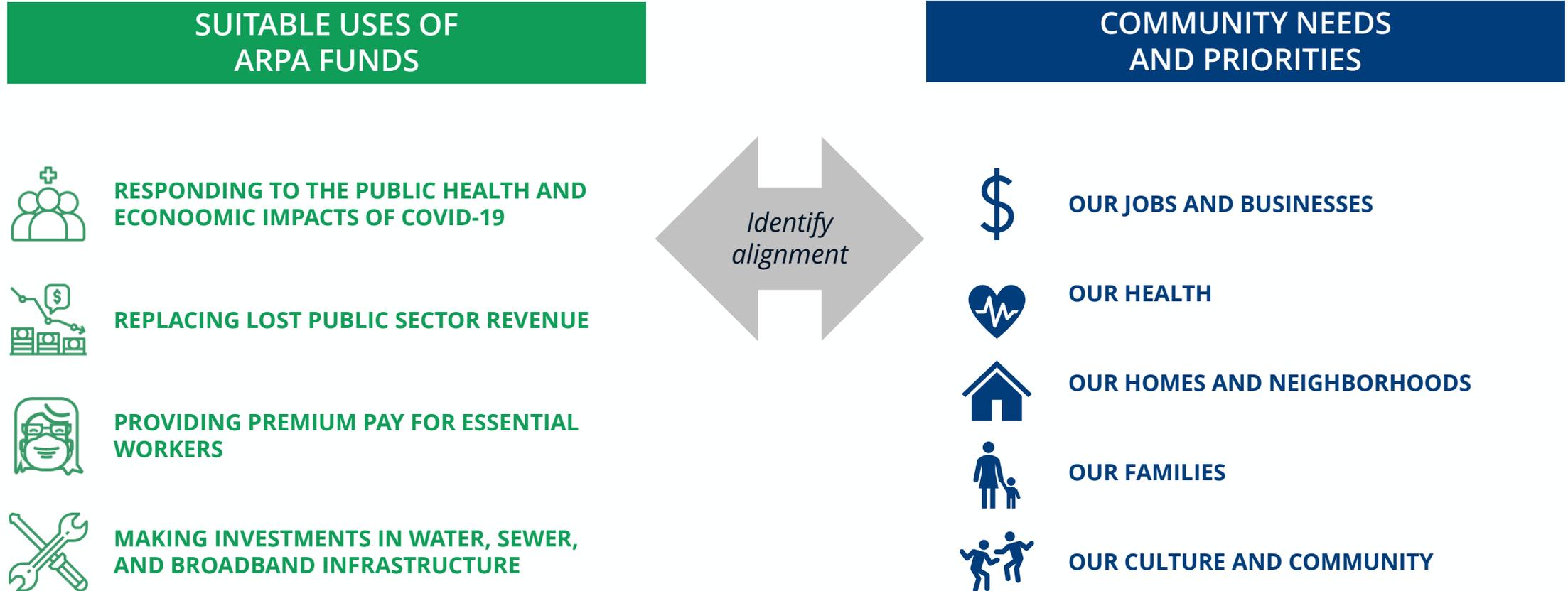
- Temporary programs that address short-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic
- One-time capital investments in property or infrastructure
- Spending to conduct studies or pilot programs
- Seed funding for loan funds
- Other projects that do not require hiring new permanent staff or ongoing commitment of funds

ARPA funds must be obligated by December 31, 2024 and expended by December 31, 2026. Richmond should consider both:

- Short-term recovery, including providing immediate relief to disproportionately impacted individuals; **AND**
- Long-term stability, including any long-term community needs Richmond can address now based on funding availability

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Richmond's ARPA Strategic Investment Plan makes recommendations for how the City should allocate its funds to address these needs in alignment with ARPA requirements.

SUITABLE USES OF ARPA FUNDS		COMMUNITY NEEDS AND PRIORITIES
RESPONDING TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND ECONOOMIC IMPACTS OF COVID-19	*Identify alignment*	OUR JOBS AND BUSINESSES
REPLACING LOST PUBLIC SECTOR REVENUE		OUR HEALTH
PROVIDING PREMIUM PAY FOR ESSENTIAL WORKERS		OUR HOMES AND NEIGHBORHOODS
MAKING INVESTMENTS IN WATER, SEWER, AND BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE		OUR FAMILIES
		OUR CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

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ARPA Investment Recommendations

EVELIO CONTRERAS/CNN

Image Source: Evelio Contreras/CNN
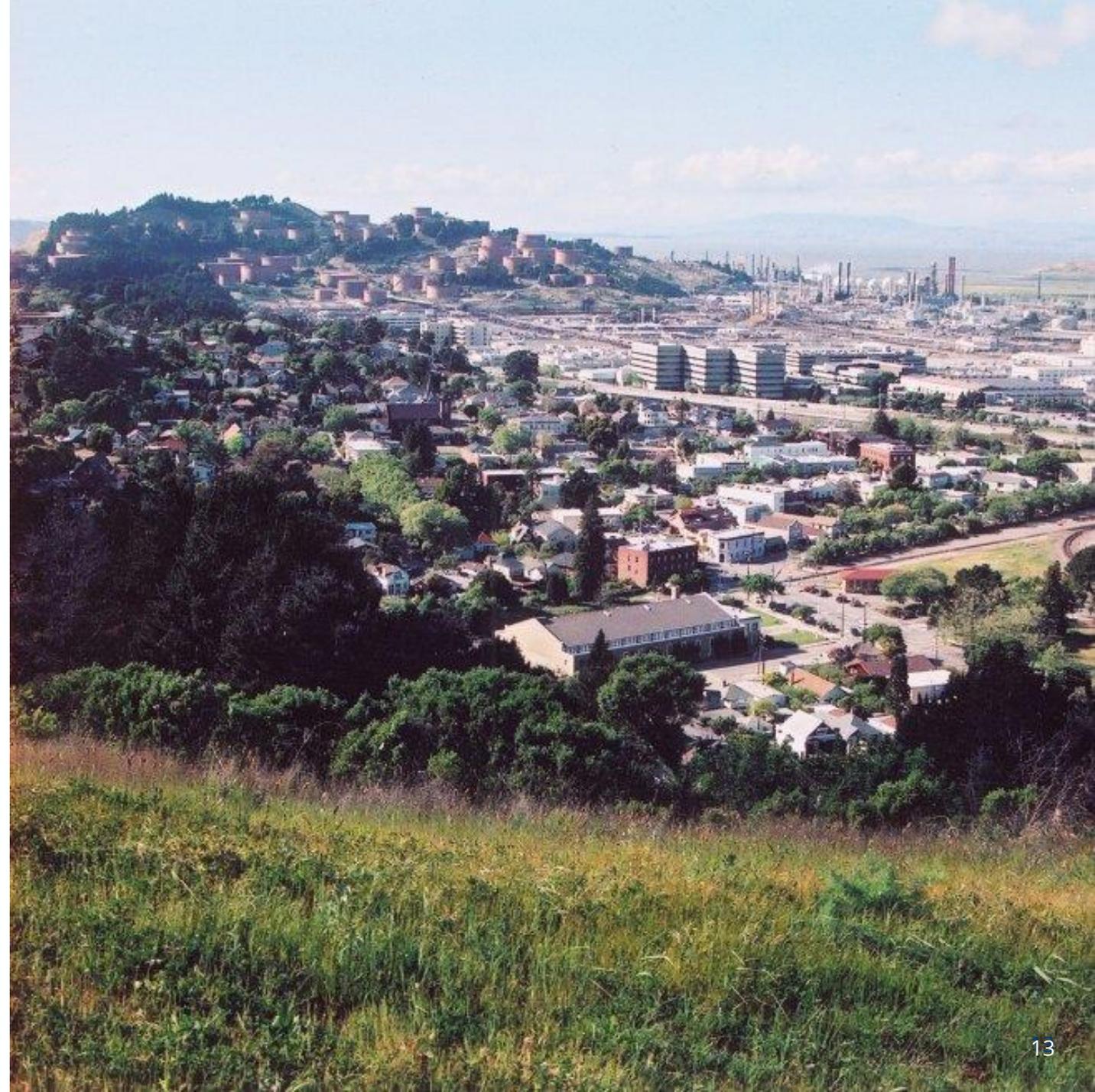
ARPA INVESTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The City should use its ARPA funds efficiently and effectively to address community needs.

This section provides high-level guidance for how the City of Richmond should deploy its ARPA funding. This includes a potential allocation of ARPA funds among areas of need, and an overview of all the strategies discussed and a guide for reading each potential project.

The subsequent recommendations are organized by the five priorities from the recommendations that emerged from the Community Needs Assessment and include:

- **Insights** from the Community Needs Assessment;

- **Case studies** highlighting how other municipalities have already allocated their ARPA funds;

- **Potential projects** that both align with ARPA requirements and community needs, and

- A brief summary of how the City has already addressed COVID-19 recovery needs, as well as **opportunities to leverage other funding sources.**
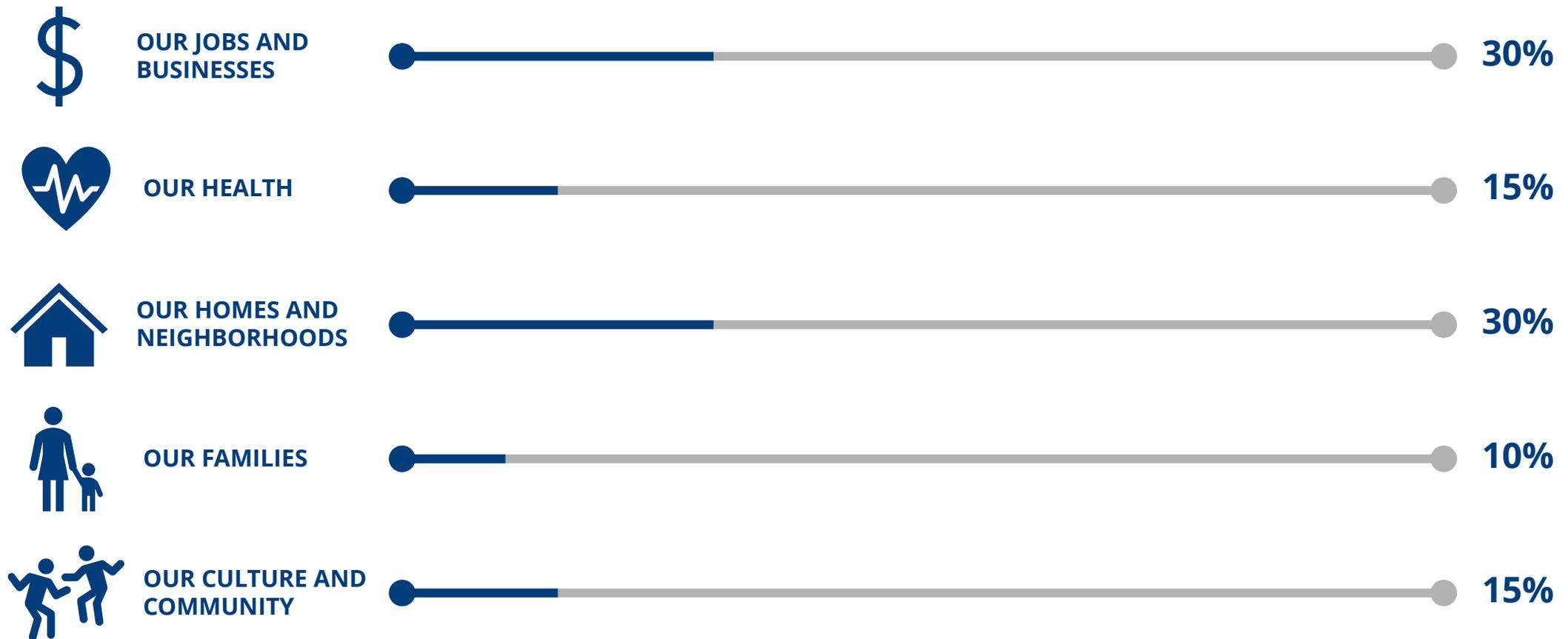
Finally, the section provides context about how the City can advance implementation and prioritize ARPA expenditures.

ARPA INVESTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The City should allocate available ARPA funds across the five areas of need based on the level of need, likely cost of potential projects, and input from the community.

Below is a potential allocation of ARPA funds based on the findings of the community needs assessment and the relative costs of potential projects.

$	**OUR JOBS AND BUSINESSES**	**30%**
♥	**OUR HEALTH**	**15%**
🏠	**OUR HOMES AND NEIGHBORHOODS**	**30%**
👪	**OUR FAMILIES**	**10%**
👥	**OUR CULTURE AND COMMUNITY**	**15%**

The Strategic Investment Plan outlines specific actions the City can take to address community needs by advancing the strategies below.

STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS COMMUNITY NEEDS

$ OUR JOBS AND BUSINESSES

A. Provide direct support to businesses
B. Increase accessibility of business services
C. Support broader economic development efforts (incl. infrastructure, marketing, and access to capital)

OUR HEALTH

D. Reduce community health disparities
E. Expand mental health services

OUR HOMES AND NEIGHBORHOODS

F. Address immediate or emergency housing needs
G. Plan for bigger citywide efforts to increase housing affordability and strengthen neighborhoods
H. Leverage available state and federal funding

OUR FAMILIES

I. Partner with West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) to support children and families
J. Expand the availability of childcare services

OUR CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

K. Expand cultural and recreational programming and public art
L. Make improvements to public facilities and subsidize available programming
M. Expand access to broadband

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The summary of potential projects includes context about how each project aligns with community needs and ARPA requirements, as well as high-level implementation needs.

How to read overview of potential projects for Richmond's ARPA funds

		Alignment with Community Needs Needs Addressed & Beneficiaries	Alignment with ARPA Requirements Eligible Uses, Timing, & Suitability	Implementation Needs Responsibility & Approximate Cost
Ⓐ	①	②	③	④

Ⓐ An overview of **how this recommended project aligns with the strategies to address community needs** (found on page 15).

① A **brief description of the recommended project** or activity, as well as which strategy it aligns with. These projects came from sources including:
- Ongoing work the City is already doing;
- Direct comments and feedback during the Community Needs Assessment; and
- Best practices and examples from other communities

② A summary of **how this project addresses critical community recovery needs**, and additional context from the Community Needs Assessment.

The summary of potential projects includes context about how each project aligns with community needs and ARPA requirements, as well as high-level implementation needs.

How to read overview of potential projects for Richmond's ARPA funds

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		Alignment with Community Needs	Alignment with ARPA Requirements	Implementation Needs
		Needs Addressed & Beneficiaries	Eligible Uses, Timing, & Suitability	Responsibility & Approximate Cost
Ⓐ	①	②	③	④

③ An overview of how well the project aligns with the requirements and best uses for ARPA funds, including:
- A **determination of the eligible uses** of ARPA funds this project aligns with
- Relevant context about project readiness and the **feasibility of deploying funds by the December 31, 2026 deadline**
- Context about whether the project is **suitable for a one-time source of funds**, or whether it requires an ongoing commitment of funds.

④ Information about whether the City, a nonprofit partner, a private consultant, or another entity would **lead implementation**. Where available, an **estimate of the scale of funding and potential impacts**. Cost estimates may include a 10% allowance for administration or management of the proposed program.

One of the ways other cities are supporting the local economy is either through expanding small business support or through workforce development initiatives.

Small businesses represent a vital part of a city's local and regional economic development, employing nearly half of the nation's workforce.

Small business owners in Richmond shared that they loved having their businesses in the City of Richmond but encountered many challenges doing business here. There was a shared sentiment across participants that the City was not sufficiently supportive of small businesses. **Richmond's strong ecosystem of nonprofit organizations help fill this gap.** Nonprofits were able to provide services like business owner outreach, sharing materials and information, and shop local campaigns, including CoBiz, Richmond Main Street Initiative and the Renaissance Center. Many perceived these organizations, not the City, as the most effective and supportive institutions during the pandemic.

Business owners shared a strong call for **more accountability and access to information from the City**. Businesses during the pandemic noted their need for a range of technical assistance to access PPP loans, formalize their structure and bookkeeping, and transition businesses to online business platforms.

CASE STUDIES

Cities are using ARPA funds to help bolster this segment of the economy in several ways. A popular strategy includes training and technical assistance programs. **Anchorage, AK** has used funds to help a nonprofit hire full-time outreach and technical assistance staff. In **Torrington, CT**, the city has allocated funds to offer special classes focused on a range of topics, including accounting, finance, and marketing. Other cities have taken an explicitly racial equity approach, as is the case in **Buffalo, NY** where the city awarded a $3.5 million grant to a minority-focused small business resource center. Funds for the project will help the center provide technical assistance and develop a start-up incubator.

One of the other ways ARPA funds have helped small businesses is through façade and aesthetic improvements. For example, in **Madison, WI**, the city decided to dedicate $500,000 in funds for retail improvement grants that businesses can use to physically rehabilitee commercial spaces. Another strategy is "buy local" campaigns. In **Oswego, NY**, the city used a "Buy One, Get One" model where residents could pay $25 to receive a $50 gift card that they could redeem at local restaurants and retailers. Participating locations were not charged a fee, which meant the city's investment helped local businesses increase foot traffic and keep money circulating in the local economy.

OUR JOBS AND BUSINESSES | RICHMOND'S NEED

To make it through the pandemic, local small businesses in Richmond needed a range of technical, economic, and social support that many felt unable to access.

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Small Business Recovery Resources

Businesses in Richmond received nearly $240M in Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans between April 2020 and May 2021. Of the roughly 3,000 loans distributed in Richmond, 75% were for amounts smaller than $30K. However, Retail, Health Care, Arts and Recreation, and other hard-hit industries received relatively low volume of PPP loans as compared to their pandemic employment losses. A San Francisco Chronicle analysis of census tracts throughout the Bay Area found that businesses located in lower income and communities of color were less likely to receive PPP loans than more affluent areas. During the listening tour, Black- and Brown-led businesses shared that having relationships with banks was a top factor in securing PPP loans.

Employment Opportunities

Though the Citywide unemployment rate has returned to pre-pandemic levels, populations with barriers to employment struggle to find new work – for example, **communities with limited English proficiency have struggled to find employment**, while individuals with a criminal record have a harder time finding work opportunities that welcome them. For other communities, social distancing regulations cut them off from their networks and they couldn't find new work.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

The City's **Short-Term Local Business Recovery Action Plan** (STLBRAP) included a deeper analysis of the near-term impacts of COVID-19 on Richmond's economy and made recommendations to support business recovery. **Access to capital and regulatory challenges** were among the major challenges identified in the STLBRAP, particularly because many businesses were hesitant or unable to take on new debt in an uncertain business environment. In response to these findings the STLBRAP recommended that small business assistance should focus on grants and technical assistance to access needed resources, as well as other changes to increase the accessibility of business services.

The City has already committed $1 million of its ARPA allocation to the Richmond Rapid Response Fund (R2F) to provide direct financial assistance to residents, businesses, and community-based organizations to meet a range of recovery needs.

LISTENING TOUR FINDING

Small business owners shared that during the pandemic, they **needed a range of technical assistance** to formalize their structure and bookkeeping and to transition businesses into online business platforms. Heading into the pandemic, many small businesses and entrepreneurs **did not have their business formalized** and did not have their financial statements organized in Quickbooks, which made it difficult to navigate PPP loans.

OUR JOBS AND BUSINESSES | POTENTIAL INVESTMENTS

As the city looks ahead towards allocation and implementation, there are existing small business support programs and relationships with nonprofits that Richmond can leverage.

	Alignment with Community Needs Needs Addressed & Beneficiaries	Alignment with ARPA Requirements Eligible Uses, Timing, & Suitability	Implementation Needs Responsibility & Approximate Cost
(A) Dedicate additional funding to **provide grants to small business owners** to support business recovery or expansion	During the pandemic, small business owners needed a range of technical assistance to adapt to new business practices, and many were unable to access recovery loans due to a lack of formalized or digital bookkeeping and other barriers. The Short-Term Local Business Recovery Action Plan also found that many small businesses had limited ability or willingness to take on additional debt. The City has already committed $1.0M of ARPA funding to provide emergency assistance to residents and businesses, but additional direct assistance to businesses may be needed.	H&E, PS Work with implementation partners to confirm feasibility of deploying funds on time No ongoing commitment	Nonprofit business service providers or fund administrator such as a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) $0.5M - $1.0M (20-35 grants with average value of $25K)
(A) Dedicate funding to **provide façade improvement grants** for businesses in commercial districts	Small business owners face ongoing recovery challenges and may have limited funds available to make needed investments in storefronts or critical repairs. Retail businesses have seen challenges from declining foot traffic.	H&E*, PS Provide pilot funding to ensure deployment on time Non-ARPA funds could be allocated based on pilot success	Nonprofit fund administrator such as a CDFI, or City $150K - $250K (10-15 grants with average value of $15K)

Strategies
A. Provide direct support to businesses
B. Increase accessibility of business services
C. Support broader economic development efforts (incl. infrastructure, marketing, and access to capital)

Eligible uses for ARPA funds:
- H&E – Responding to the public health and economic impacts of COVID-19
- PS – Replacing lost public sector revenue
- PP – Premium Pay for Eligible Workers
- WSB – Investments in Water, Sewer, and Broadband Infrastructure

* indicates eligibility in Qualified Census Tracts or disproportionately impacted communities)

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The City can use its ARPA funds to provide direct support to businesses and to increase the uptake and accessibility of business services.

	Alignment with Community Needs Needs Addressed & Beneficiaries	Alignment with ARPA Requirements Eligible Uses, Timing, & Suitability	Implementation Needs Responsibility & Approximate Cost
B Provide funding to nonprofit business service providers to hire and train community members to **provide translation, or to expand outreach and technical assistance to business owners** in multiple languages to improve access to recovery funding and services	Many small business owners had difficulty accessing recovery funding due to digital literacy, capacity, or language barriers. Nonprofits are a primary resource for local businesses, but additional support is needed.	H&E, PS Work with partners to confirm feasibility of deploying funds on time Funding for temporary additional capacity, no ongoing commitment	Nonprofit business service providers, RichmondWORKS (tent.) $150K - $250K (15-30 part-time temp workers at $15/hr)
B Provide funding to **launch a Buy-Local Campaign** for Richmond businesses, including developing branded marketing materials, planning neighborhood business events, and consolidating shared resources.	Small businesses in Richmond faced challenges due to COVID-19, including reduced business and the challenges of adapting to accommodate remote work and social distancing. The Short-Term Business Recovery Action Plan identified a Buy-Local Campaign as a way for the City and its partners to promote and celebrate locally-owned businesses.	H&E, PS Program design completed, so funds can be deployed quickly No ongoing commitment	City & Economic Development Working Group $16,500 - $45,000
C **Make streetscape improvements** in commercial corridors	Many businesses, community members, and commercial property owners have cited built environment challenges including buildings in need of repair and illegal dumping in commercial areas. Richmond's Business Investment and Attraction Strategy highlights the need for built environment improvements to support Richmond's businesses.	H&E*, PS City to confirm timing No ongoing commitment	City TBD based on City capital needs

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The City can use its ARPA funds to provide direct support to businesses and to increase the uptake and accessibility of business services.

	Alignment with Community Needs Needs Addressed & Beneficiaries	Alignment with ARPA Requirements Eligible Uses, Timing, & Suitability	Implementation Needs Responsibility & Approximate Cost
Study the feasibility of establishing a public bank to increase access to capital for residents and businesses	Some business owners had difficulty accessing recovery loans through commercial lenders. Residents may also have barriers to accessing capital. A public bank could help more businesses and residents access financing for businesses, education, and homeownership.	PS Funds can be deployed on time No ongoing commitment	City, consultant $100K - $200K
Expand the provision of English as a Second Language classes or subsidize class fees for job-seeking residents	Job-seeking residents with language barriers have continued to face challenges returning to work in the wake of COVID-19.	H&E, PS Subsidizing fees for existing classes may be the most efficient way to deploy funds by the deadline No ongoing commitment	RichmondWORKS TBD, potentially $50K-$100K

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OUR JOBS AND BUSINESSES

As the City looks ahead towards allocation and implementation, there are existing small business support programs and relationships with nonprofits that Richmond can leverage.

CURRENT CITY EFFORTS	IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH	OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

Business Recovery Planning

- The City developed a Short-Term Local Business Recovery Action Plan and Business Investment and Attraction Strategy.

ARPA Expenditures

- The City dedicated $1M to the Richmond Rapid Response Fund which provides emergency assistance to businesses and residents. Economic recovery & security is one of the fund's priority areas.
- The City has used ARPA funds to undertake a Green-Blue New Deal Workforce Development Plan.

Nonprofit Business Service Providers

- Richmond has many nonprofits that provide outreach and services directly to businesses. The City can award funds to these partners to provide enhanced services, and use nonprofit networks to connect businesses with resources.

Other

- Some funds may be best distributed through financial institutions that can handle large financial transactions.
- RichmondWORKS, the city's workforce development agency, provides services to businesses and job seekers.

County Funding

- The County has funding such as Community Development Block Grant funds that can be leveraged to support infrastructure investments and other economic recovery efforts.
- In addition, there are potentially other State resources that the city can leverage to support business development.
- The City's Small Business Recovery Action Plan and Business Improvement and Attraction Strategy identify funding sources and implementation needs to support Richmond business recovery.

More people sought mental health services as a result of the pandemic, including disconnected youth, overburdened parents, and isolated older adults.

According to community providers, the demand for mental health services has risen exponentially during the pandemic.

Isolation, stress, and other issues have contributed to a growing need for mental health services. Many parents spoke about their **children's mental health challenges** and noted that they needed to advocate for their children to receive adequate care. Populations with cultural or other barriers, including the disabled, seniors, limited English speaking residents, and the immigrant and Asian Pacific Islander refugee community, reported an increased sense of isolation due to an inability to connect to community or access services. In response to these challenges, some residents accessed mental health services for the first time during the pandemic. However, some **reported a lack of culturally-competent and accessible mental health service providers**. For instance, those seeking care for the first time might find it challenging to connect with providers that do not understand their unique beliefs and behaviors in their treatment.

CASE STUDIES

According to a 2021 report on the state of mental health in the United State, the number of people living with a mental health condition increased over the duration of the pandemic to nearly one in four individuals, or roughly 47.1 million Americans. As cities and the private sector begin to explore this growing health care need, ARPA offers a way for municipalities to address mental health by either expanding existing services or piloting new programs.

In San Francisco, the city started a **Street Crisis Response Team** in partnership with the San Francisco Department of Public Health, the Fire Department, and Emergency Management. The program provides an opportunity for non-law enforcement response to behavioral health crises, including delivering de-escalation services and linking people to the appropriate treatment options they may need. ARPA funding helped the City expand the program and hire more staff. Similar crises intervention programs in cities like Dallas, Denver, and Portland have open budget proposals or are already used ARPA to expand their service.

ARPA funding is also used to address the growing youth and young adult mental health crisis. In **St. Louis**, the city has committed $1 million through the Department of Health to help create safe spaces, drop-in centers, and community projects for youth. **Kings County**, which includes Seattle, have allocated $2 million in ARPA funding to support an initiative to "build, improve and enhance culturally appropriate behavioral health services" for communities disproportionately impacted by COVID.

The City should use its ARPA funds to reduce community health disparities and expand mental health services.

	Alignment with Community Needs Needs Addressed & Beneficiaries	Alignment with ARPA Requirements Eligible Uses, Timing, & Suitability	Implementation Needs Responsibility & Approximate Cost
(D) Create a mobile service center to provide public health outreach and referrals, including for mental health services.	Community health providers indicate an increase demand for mental health services during the pandemic. Offering mobile services can help address this urgent need, particularly for vulnerable populations, like the elderly, who may face mobility or digital accessibility challenges.	H&E, PS Make deployment deadline a requirement of the NOFA Startup would be a one-time cost. Additional funding might be needed to subsidize ongoing operations.	Implementation by nonprofit service provider identified through a NOFA TBD based on NOFA responses
(D) Create programs to provide residents and families with community health tools including nutrition education, fresh food access, and programming to help parents of children in crisis	Isolation, stress, and other issues have contributed to a growing need for mental health services. Populations with cultural or other barriers, including the disabled, seniors, limited English speaking residents, and the immigrant and Asian Pacific Islander refugee community, reported an increased sense of isolation due to an inability to connect to community or access services.	H&E, PS Make deployment deadline a requirement of the NOFA Startup would be a one-time cost. Additional funding might be needed to subsidize ongoing operations.	Implementation by nonprofit service provider identified through a NOFA TBD based on NOFA responses

Strategies
D.   Reduce community health disparities
E.   Expand mental health services

Eligible uses for ARPA funds:
- H&E – Responding to the public health and economic impacts of COVID-19
- PS – Replacing lost public sector revenue
- PP – Premium Pay for Eligible Workers
- WSB – Investments in Water, Sewer, and Broadband Infrastructure

* indicates eligibility in Qualified Census Tracts or disproportionately impacted communities)

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The City should use its ARPA funds to reduce community health disparities and expand mental health services.

	Alignment with Community Needs Needs Addressed & Beneficiaries	Alignment with ARPA Requirements Eligible Uses, Timing, & Suitability	Implementation Needs Responsibility & Approximate Cost
(D) **Provide financial support to ensure access to healthcare** by providing families with help covering their medical costs and related transportation costs	Rising costs due to inflation, and job losses means that households have less money to spend on nonessentials. Services like healthcare are often deprioritized over groceries and rent.	H&E, PS Make deployment deadline a requirement of the NOFA Startup would be a one-time cost. Additional funding might be needed to subsidize ongoing operations.	Implementation by nonprofit service provider identified through a NOFA TBD based on NOFA responses
(D) (E) **Develop a program for community-provided mental health services** by training residents to provide counseling within their communities	Residents noted difficulty accessing culturally competent and representative mental health service providers, which contributed to feelings of isolation and mental health crisis.	H&E, PS Make deployment deadline a requirement of the NOFA Startup would be a one-time cost. Additional funding might be needed to subsidize ongoing operations.	Implementation by nonprofit service provider. RichmondWORKS may be able to coordinate training TBD based on NOFA responses
(E) **Expand the provision of mental health services in schools**	Many parents spoke about their children's mental health challenges, and noted that they needed to advocate for their children to receive adequate care.	H&E, PS Make deployment deadline a requirement of the NOFA Temporary cost for expanded services	Programming should be deployed in partnership with WCCUSD; work with WCCUSD to determine whether a nonprofit partner is needed. TBD based on potential scale of added services.

DRAFT

Health services are frequently provided at the County level and by nonprofits, but the City can put forward funding for organizations to provide needed additional services.

DRAFT

CITY PROGRESS MADE

Early Pandemic Response

- The City took action early in the pandemic to address the health and safety needs of the community, including launching a website and hotline with health information, community resources, and information about County-provided services.

ARPA Expenditures

- The City dedicated $1M to the Richmond Rapid Response Fund which provides emergency assistance to businesses and residents. Two priority areas for this fund are food & essential supplies and health & healing.

IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

Nonprofit Service Providers

- Nonprofit organizations will be crucial partners in the temporary expansion of health care services and outreach to improve community health outcomes.

- The City should issue a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for regional health care providers to deliver programming that meets community needs guided by the proposed projects.

Regional Partnerships

- The City should work with WCCUSD and Contra Costa County to identify ways it can deploy funding to supplement available programs.

OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

County Funds

- Contra Costa County has approved the use of over $112M in ARPA funds for its health department to support COVID-19 response, including addressing disparities in public health outcomes through community engagement and targeted outreach.

State

- Through State Proposition 63, California has a $11.6 billion available this upcoming fiscal year to fund mental health programs throughout the state.

The State has dedicated significant recovery resources to increasing housing affordability throughout California.

Housing insecurity is more pressing than ever; as a result of COVID some Richmond residents faced loss of housing despite eviction protections, and others experiencing homelessness became disconnected from services.

Richmond residents may be particularly vulnerable to eviction due to a perceived lack of legal protections, despite the City temporary ordinance and State tenant relief act. Contra Costa County has one of the highest rates of pandemic evictions in the Bay Area, second only to Solano County. Eviction rates are 2 to 3 times higher for Black households in the County. During the pandemic, the homeless population in Contra Costa County grew by 35%. According to the 2021 Continuum of Care Annual Report, of those who reported losing their housing, 30% of households were in West County, where Richmond has the largest population.

LISTENING TOUR FINDING

Focus group participants expressed the need to **make rental assistance programs more accessible**. One participant shared that after applying for rental relief, "we had to take out a loan because it took 8 months [to receive funding from the State]. We couldn't access services even if they existed."

AVAILABLE STATE FUNDING

California has dedicated ARPA funds and other funding to create and expand programs to increase the supply of housing and address housing security and affordability statewide. These include:

- **Multifamily Housing Program:** Provides low-interest deferred-payment loans for new construction, rehabilitation, and preservation of permanent and transitional housing that serves lower-income households
- **California Housing Accelerator Fund:** Provides funding for shovel-ready development projects that have received awards of funding from the department of Housing and Community Development but have funding gaps
- **HOME-ARP Program:** Funding for the Department of Housing and Community Development to assist individuals or households experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness by providing rental assistance, supportive services, shelters, and other support
- **State Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program:** Provides tax credits to support the development of rental housing for low-income households
- **Adaptive Reuse Program and Homekey Program:** Provides funding to convert commercial buildings, hotels, and motels into affordable housing
- **Infill Infrastructure Grant Program:** Provides funding to accelerate the development of infill projects in brownfields and downtowns
- **Preservation Fund:** Funding to preserve existing affordable housing
- **Legal Aid:** Provides funding for legal services to prevent evictions

DRAFT

The City can use ARPA funds to address immediate housing needs while planning for bigger citywide efforts.

DRAFT

	Alignment with Community Needs Needs Addressed & Beneficiaries	Alignment with ARPA Requirements Eligible Uses, Timing, & Suitability	Implementation Needs Responsibility & Approximate Cost
Provide funding for emergency rental assistance to prevent eviction and homelessness **F**	Rent burden had been high in Richmond in advance of the pandemic and was made worse as the pandemic disrupted workers' ability to earn income. Focus group participants indicated that this is an important, unaddressed challenge. As one participant explained, "My husband got sick and he also had high fever. No one helped us with high rent."	H&E, PS Funding can be deployed promptly to meet immediate need, dependent on capacity of fund administrator No ongoing commitment	City or nonprofit fund administrator TBD based on capacity of fund administrator. $1.0-$1.5 million could provide 12 months of assistance to approx. 100 households.
Provide funding to hire and train community members to **provide translation, or to expand outreach and technical assistance** to residents in multiple languages **to help them access available housing assistance** **G** **H**	Richmond is a diverse community – over half of residents speak a language other than English and a third are foreign-born. However, that cultural and linguistic diversity is not always reflected in the services that the city currently offers. Additional funding can help address this gap.	H&E, PS Work with partners to confirm feasibility of deploying funds on time Temporary additional capacity, no ongoing commitment	Nonprofit service provider, RichmondWORKS (tentatively) $150K- $$250K (15-30 part-time temp workers at $15/hr)

Strategies
F. Address immediate or emergency housing needs
G. Plan for bigger citywide efforts to increase housing affordability and strengthen neighborhoods
H. Leverage available state and federal funding

Eligible uses for ARPA funds:
- H&E – Responding to the public health and economic impacts of COVID-19
- PS – Replacing lost public sector revenue
- PP – Premium Pay for Eligible Workers
- WSB – Investments in Water, Sewer, and Broadband Infrastructure
* indicates eligibility in Qualified Census Tracts or disproportionately impacted communities)

OUR HOMES AND NEIGHBORHOODS | POTENTIAL INVESTMENTS

The City can use ARPA funds to address immediate housing needs while planning for bigger citywide efforts.

	Alignment with Community Needs Needs Addressed & Beneficiaries	Alignment with ARPA Requirements Eligible Uses, Timing, & Suitability	Implementation Needs Responsibility & Approximate Cost
Develop a citywide Affordable Housing Plan G F	54% of Richmond renters are housing cost burdened, which means they spend over one-third of their income on rent, compared to 50% in Contra Costa County and 44% in the Metro Area.	H&E, PS Funds can be deployed on time No ongoing commitment	City, consultant $150K - $200K
Make streetscape improvements in neighborhoods, including trash cleanup, to enhance neighborhood safety and quality of life; Invest in green streets projects G	In both the survey and listening tour, participants indicated that the city should invest more in its public spaces by making sidewalk and road repairs, as well as other quality of life improvements.	H&E*, PS City to confirm timing No ongoing commitment	City TBD based on City capital needs
Hire temporary grant writers to pursue additional funding for neighborhood and affordable housing improvements H	City staff have limited capacity to take on additional work to secure funding in the form of grants from the state, philanthropic partners, and other funders that could address the City's housing and neighborhood development needs.	H&E, PS Funds can be deployed on time No ongoing commitment	City $50K - $100K (2-4 part time grantwriters)

OUR HOMES AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Affordable housing is costly to produce. The City can use its ARPA funds to meet near-term needs, plan for bigger investments, and leverage other funding sources.

CITY PROGRESS MADE

ARPA Expenditures

- The City dedicated $1M to the Richmond Rapid Response Fund which provides emergency assistance to businesses and residents. Housing & homelessness is one of the fund's priority areas.

IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

Use ARPA efficiently and leverage other funding

- The City will not be able to create many units of affordable housing directly using ARPA alone. It should focus funding on helping address emergency needs while identifying a longer-term strategy to support affordability.

- The City should help its residents, developers, and departments to access available funds from state, county, and federal sources to address affordable housing.

OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

State Funds

- The State of California has dedicated significant funds, including its COVID-19 recovery funds, to addressing affordable housing challenges statewide.

County Funds

- Contra Costa County has dedicated over $10M in HOME-ARP funds to the development of affordable rental housing. The City can work with the County and developers to identify suitable development sites in Richmond.

OUR FAMILIES

There is a growing need for affordable and accessible childcare as well as after school activities for youth, especially ones that address learning loss from the pandemic.

While California offers subsidies for childcare, support is capped by income.

A family of three can earn no more than $78K to be eligible for childcare assistance. **Due to the rising costs of living, families who might make slightly more than the household maximum are left with limited childcare options, often waiting months, or even years to find a slot**. The state is providing some relief in the form of tax refunds; California's 2022-23 budget includes $9.5 billion in tax refunds to directly benefit families. Households making as much as $75,000 for individuals or $150,000 for joint filers will receive $350 per taxpayer, plus an additional $350 if they have at least one dependent - a single parent would receive $700 and two-parent families would receive $1,050.

There are additional barriers that families face once their children are in school. While remote learning was difficult for everyone, its impact was particularly harmful for low income and people of color. These demographics experienced more dramatic educational declines in reading and math proficiency than their whiter, more affluent peers. During listening sessions, people expressed a need for **programming that addressed either educational loss or more focused interventions for older youth**.

CASE STUDIES

One major factor driving rising costs of childcare is a lack of qualified providers and caregivers. Local governments and nonprofits are trying to address this. In San Francisco, **The Good Rural**, a local nonprofit is using city and private funding to develop a pipeline of licensed childcare providers. The program provides 1-on-1 support and group training, as well as support navigating the licensing process, and how to build a successful home-based business. This program is still in its pilot phase but has directly working with over 10 informal childcare providers to help them gain an official license.

Cities have used ARPA funding to address both learning loss and provide general youth programming in a few ways. In Akron, OH, the city has allocated funds for a **Youth Violence Prevention Community Grant Program**, where children in grades K-3 can participate in an afterschool program. As other cities have even developed youth-specific plans for how they will allocate ARPA funding, like in New Haven, CT, where the city dedicate its first round of funding ($6.3 million) to support a **"summer reset" initiative**, which included expanding summer learning, youth safety initiatives, and an arts and cultural events.

LISTENING TOUR FINDING

In a conversation with Building Blocks for Kids, Latina Center, and Family Justice, families voiced the need for **education and program support for older children 6-19 years of age**. While speaking with the Reentry Success Center, participants stressed interest in **support for people coming out of high school,** who "need more direction or help, instead of being dumped on the street. Young people could use help, education, and housing assistance."

OUR FAMILIES | POTENTIAL INVESTMENTS

The City can partner with West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) to increase support for children and families and to support the expansion of childcare services.

	Alignment with Community Needs Needs Addressed & Beneficiaries	Alignment with ARPA Requirements Eligible Uses, Timing, & Suitability	Implementation Needs Responsibility & Approximate Cost
Provide services for families and youth with the goal of increasing third grade literacy rates	Two years of navigating remote learning and in-person classes have contributed to declines in reading comprehension in younger grades. Third grade is an important year for students – studies show that if children are not proficient readers by the time they enter fourth grade, it will become harder for them to catch up.	H&E, PS Work with partners to confirm timing Funds can support startup and design but additional funding may be needed for ongoing operations	WCCUSD, Nonprofit service providers, City and County TBD
Provide expanded programming for youth to meet current gaps in City and School District programming, such as for middle school-aged children	Many youth, parents, and formerly incarcerated residents spoke to the need for youth programming. West Contra Costa Unified School District noted that there is a gap in programming for middle schoolers in particular, and that better family engagement is needed at all levels. One reason why this happens is because parents are often less involved due to work commitments; a way to address this be paying parents a small stipend for engaging with their children.	H&E, PS Work with partners to confirm timing Funds can support temporary operations but additional funding may be needed for ongoing operations	WCCUSD, Nonprofit service providers, City (e.g. recreation department) TBD

Strategies
I. Partner with West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) to support children and families
J. Expand the availability of childcare services

Eligible uses for ARPA funds:
- H&E – Responding to the public health and economic impacts of COVID-19
- PS – Replacing lost public sector revenue
- PP – Premium Pay for Eligible Workers
- WSB – Investments in Water, Sewer, and Broadband Infrastructure
indicates eligibility in Qualified Census Tracts or disproportionately impacted communities)

The City can partner with West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) to increase support for children and families and to support the expansion of childcare services.

	Alignment with Community Needs Needs Addressed & Beneficiaries	Alignment with ARPA Requirements Eligible Uses, Timing, & Suitability	Implementation Needs Responsibility & Approximate Cost
I — **Provide additional support services for students experiencing homelessness** at the City and School District	Schools are often the only way children and youth receive social supports, yet administrators and staff are often unequipped or underfunded to help address those challenges. Attendance data showed that about 3,400 students left West Contra Costa Unified during the pandemic. One resident shared that "The youth got forgotten. Doing school from home was really hard. The school district lost a lot of students because teachers couldn't connect with them. A lot of kids got lost, a lot of education got lost." Another noted that some students "had to stop school in order to work, because if they didn't work, they couldn't make ends meet. We saw 16-year-olds entering the workforce full-time."	H&E, PS Work with partners to confirm timing Funds can support temporary operations but additional funding may be needed for ongoing operations	WCCUSD, Nonprofit service providers TBD
J — **Provide funding and technical assistance to help informal childcare providers** establish formal, licensed childcare facilities or preschools, and to increase their capacity	Childcare, not housing, has become the highest expense for families in California, driven in large part because there is a lack of certified childcare providers. Lack of affordable childcare may be a challenge preventing some residents from returning to work.	H&E, PS Work with partners to confirm timing Funds can support temporary operations but additional funding may be needed for ongoing operations	Nonprofit service providers, CDFIs, foundations and other philanthropic partners

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OUR FAMILIES

Students and their families were impacted by COVID-19. The City can use funding to pilot interventions and programs to help address short-term educational losses.

CITY PROGRESS MADE	IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH	OTHER FUNDING SOURCES
ARPA Expenditures	**Partnership with WCCUSD**	**State & Federal Funding**
▪ The City dedicated $1M to the Richmond Rapid Response Fund which provides emergency assistance to businesses and residents. A portion of that fund is earmarked for education & learning.	▪ The West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) will be a critical partner. The City can work with WCCUSD to identify and bridge gaps in programming and support for students and their families.	▪ The West Contra Costa Unified School District can potentially contribute funds to support expanded programming through the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations. The district received $29 million to help address lost instructional time. ▪ There are also additional federal funds available to help school districts address the rising rates of student homelessness.

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OUR CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

Access to affordable, reliable internet service is an important component of staying connected to community events, educational opportunities, and basic services.

Richmond residents are struggling with both broadband access and digital literacy.

According to the 2020 US Census, 90 percent of households in Richmond have access to the internet. However, **the quality and cost of internet access can vary widely** across income groups. For families that had parents and students relying on the internet for work or school at the same time, the quality of their internet access dipped.

Digital literacy, including accessing virtual meeting spaces, became a constraint for many residents, particularly those from older demographics. Community events, including religious groups, met online; not being literate in programs like Zoom limits the ability to connect with others or participate in remote work. Many services, such as vaccination and testing appointments, required online scheduling further compounding access to care.

Emerging from the pandemic, it is essential to both **increase digital access and literacy** and **reinvigorate physical spaces for connection and community**. By investing in parks, libraries, and community spaces, residents can come together while still reaching their families and communities online.

CASE STUDIES

Los Angeles County is home to over 400,000 families who do not have a reliable home internet connection. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the Los Angeles County Internal Services Department (ISD) designed and supported the implementation of Community Broadband Networks and Digital Navigators, both of which are solutions to broadband access, affordability, and adoption for communities impacted by the digital divide. Community Broadband Networks are public-private partnerships to deploy new high-speed internet infrastructure and guarantee affordable internet service. ISD was awarded $56 million in American Rescue Plan Act funding to implement the Community Broadband Network program and is currently partnering with a consulting firm to implement the digital navigators program.

Other cities and counties across California have set aside ARPA funding to address broadband access. The library system in **Paso Robles** used ARPA funding to purchase hotspots, which residents can checkout. In **Santa Cruz County**, funding was allocated to connect housing developments and low-income neighborhoods with free or low-cost Internet service. Around the country, municipalities have gotten creative with their ARPA funding to address broadband needs. For example, **Dallas County** is using ARPA funding to focus on providing residents with a minimum of 100 Mbps download and upload speeds; funding will target households and businesses without access, as well as those with low speeds.

OUR CULTURE AND COMMUNITY | POTENTIAL INVESTMENTS

The City can use ARPA funds to support expanded cultural programming and amenities to enhance mental health, community wellbeing, and quality of life.

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	Alignment with Community Needs Needs Addressed & Beneficiaries	Alignment with ARPA Requirements Eligible Uses, Timing, & Suitability	Implementation Needs Responsibility & Approximate Cost
Provide grants to community nonprofit organizations providing critical cultural and supportive services to Richmond's communities	Richmond is a diverse city, with half of residents speaking a language other than English; a third of the population was born outside of the U.S. However, the lack of culturally competent and representative resources means that a significant portion of the city continues to struggle accessing information and resources.	H&E, PS Make deployment deadline a requirement of the NOFA Funds for temporary or one-time programming; no ongoing commitment	Nonprofit organizations TBD based on NOFA responses
Dedicate funding to commission local artists to create public art installations	Arts and cultural institutions were among the hardest hit industries during the early stages of COVID and were less likely to receive Paycheck Protection Program funding. Investment in public art will not only support local creators, but also provide a sense of community pride and connection.	H&E, PS Make deployment deadline a requirement of the NOFA Funds for temporary or one-time programming; no ongoing commitment	Arts organizations, City TBD based on NOFA responses

(K)

Strategies
K. Expand cultural and recreational programming and public art
L. Make improvements to public facilities and subsidize available programming
M. Expand access to broadband

Eligible uses for ARPA funds:
- H&E – Responding to the public health and economic impacts of COVID-19
- PS – Replacing lost public sector revenue
- PP – Premium Pay for Eligible Workers
- WSB – Investments in Water, Sewer, and Broadband Infrastructure
* indicates eligibility in Qualified Census Tracts or disproportionately impacted communities)*

The City can use ARPA funds to support expanded cultural programming and amenities to enhance mental health, community wellbeing, and quality of life.

	Alignment with Community Needs Needs Addressed & Beneficiaries	Alignment with ARPA Requirements Eligible Uses, Timing, & Suitability	Implementation Needs Responsibility & Approximate Cost
Make improvements to parks, open space, community centers, libraries and other amenities to improve safety and utility	Richmond residents rely on their churches, neighborhoods, and community organizations to stay socially and economically connected, and need events to return safely and quickly. Improvements and upgrades to these facilities will help connect residents who have felt socially disconnected from their neighbors and community or faced mental health challenges.	PS City to confirm timing for improvements Funds for one-time capital improvements; no ongoing commitment	City
Provide additional free or subsidized community and cultural programs through the City's parks, libraries, and community centers	During the pandemic, there were significantly fewer places to connect, contributing to mental health challenges and feelings of isolation, as a result of closure of day programs for the disabled, churches and community centers, the cancellation of large cultural celebrations and community festivals, and the closure of ethnic restaurants or the shift to take-out only service.	H&E (may depend on type of programming), PS City to confirm ability to deploy subsidized programming Funds for temporary programming	City
Address digital access and service disparities by expanding broadband to under-resourced communities	While 90 percent of households in the city of Richmond have internet access, statewide data shows that this access is likely not equitably distributed across income levels. During the listening tour, residents shared that the need for internet service and technology added a new expense and source of stress.	WSB, PS City to confirm timing for improvements Funds for one-time improvements; no ongoing commitment	City

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OUR CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

Nonprofit organizations played critical, central roles for many types of communities during the pandemic, but still face tight resourcing and some competition for funding.

CITY PROGRESS MADE	IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH	OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

ARPA Expenditures

- The City has dedicated over $2M in ARPA funds to make critical repairs and improvements to community amenities, including the main library, Nevin community center, the recreation center, Richmond Museum, and MLK. Jr. Park.

Dual Approach

- Part of the implementation approach for culture & community involves issuing a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) or identifying arts and cultural service organizations to provide expanded programming and public arts in the near or intermediate term.

- The other part relies on investing directly into improved city services for recreation and community amenities.

State Funding

- California Arts Council has several grant programs that provide general operating relief for arts and cultural organizations that experienced negative economic impacts of COVID.

- The California State Library has a state-funded high-speed broadband program that supports libraries and other organizations with internet access.

Federal Funding

- The Affordable Connectivity Program provides eligible households with a $30 monthly credit for their internet service plan.

03

Guidance to Prioritize ARPA Spending

Image Source: The Richmond Standard

DRAFT

The City may not be able to advance all potential strategies identified in the Strategic Investment Plan. To prioritize investments, the City should identify projects that:

BUILD ON CITY PROGRESS MADE

The City has already begun pursuing investments and programs to address COVID-19 recovery needs identified through the Community Needs Assessment and other outreach, as noted throughout this plan. Projects for which planning and implementation is already in progress will be easier to advance within the timeframe for ARPA funds.

- The City should prioritize **projects that are "shovel-ready"** or ready to be funded, or that can easily be advanced to funding readiness.

- The City should also prioritize projects with **public and political support.**

ALIGN CAPACITY AND IMPACTS

The City will implement some projects directly, and engage consultants or nonprofit partners to advance others. City staff have limited capacity for new projects, so it will be critical to consider capacity for implementation and impacts.

- The City should prioritize **projects for which capacity exists or can be outsourced** to ensure implementation and consider staff's capacity to oversee consultants or a NOFA process.

- The City should **evaluate NOFA submissions** on: their alignment with ARPA investment strategies and the City's policy for one-time sources of funding; the level of funding requested; the organization's capacity to deliver services within the timeframe for ARPA funds; and their anticipated impacts.

- The City should apply ARPA funds toward a mix of investments that **address immediate needs and advance long-term initiatives**. In addition, the City's use of APRA funds should **align with the City's ongoing equity work.**

LEVERAGE OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

ARPA is a flexible source of one-time funding to support recovery needs. However, community recovery needs are greater than what the City can address through ARPA alone. The City should prioritize projects that leverage or help capture other funding sources, such as:

- Hiring **grant writers** to secure additional funds for City projects.

- Providing technical assistance that **helps residents and businesses access other funding sources** and services.

- Investing in infrastructure improvements that may attract or **catalyze private investment.**

Using the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to Meet our Highest Needs

Richmond, CA | Strategic Investment Plan

DECEMBER 2022

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