



FOR DETAILS CONTACT
Catherine Lazorko, Director
Communication & Engagement
P: 919-918-7516

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

Carrboro considers plan for use of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds

October 6, 2022

The Carrboro Town Council is considering a plan to spend its American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds.

The American Rescue Plan Act 2021 signed into law by President Biden on March 11, 2021, provides \$350 billion to state, local, and Tribal governments across the country to support their response to and recovery from the COVID-19 public health emergency.

These funds may be used to:

- Fight the pandemic and support families and businesses struggling with its public health and economic impacts,
- Maintain vital public services, even amid declines in revenue, and
- Build a strong, resilient, and equitable recovery by making investments that support long-term growth and opportunity.

Town of Carrboro will receive \$6.7 million as part of this allocation.

The Town's framework for use of ARPA is centered around Council goals and policy; racial equity and inclusion; and environmental justice and climate action. Also, the Town has sought to leverage local and regional partnerships and existing data, along with outreach to the community, to identify the impact of the pandemic.

ARPA rules by the U.S. Treasury emphasize the importance of public input, transparency, and accountability and urge grant recipients to engage constituents and communities in developing plans to use ARPA funds.

The Town has employed several strategies to develop the framework for use of these funds. These include:

Extensive Community Outreach

The Town conducted extensive surveys, including statistically valid surveying with the ETC Institute. More than 975 people participated in three separate surveys, providing 275 comments, ideas, and suggestions. The No. 1 ranked ARPA funding priority was to support public health and disproportionately impacted individuals and communities. View the list of comments and suggestions at <https://www.townofcarrboro.org/DocumentCenter/View/11838/ARPA-Comments-and-Feedback>. Both online and paper surveys in English, Spanish and Burmese were offered. Town staff also worked with the Refugee Community Partnership to increase survey responses from immigrants and refugees in Carrboro.

Reaching Underserved Areas of Carrboro

To reach underserved areas of our community as part of the Carrboro Community Survey, the Town reached out to 1,800 residents within Carrboro's Qualified Census Tract with a postcard invitation to participate. This outreach brought an additional 135 residents who provided their input. The survey results showed that the No. 1 ranked ARPA funding priority was to provide services to disproportionately impacted communities and individuals and support public health.

Qualified Census Tracts (QCTs) is a designation used by the U.S. Treasury and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to define underserved and disproportionately impacted communities. QCTs are census areas where at least half of households have lower income than most of the surrounding region.

Interviews and One-on-One Engagement

Town staff conducted more than 30 one-on-one interviews with nonprofit and human services agencies. Organizations were asked how the pandemic continues to affect their agencies and the communities they serve.

BIPOC Business Roundtables were held to hear the needs and challenges of Black, Indigenous, Latinx and People of Color businesses in Carrboro, and the role the Town can play to help businesses start and grow. The Town has held six roundtables between July 2020 to May 2022.

Town staff also engaged with residents about ARPA funding priorities during the Town's Carrboro Conversations in-person and virtual events in February 2022.

The Town Manager's Office conducted interviews to hear from Town Council members about their views on prioritization of community needs. These are being considered along with operational needs identified by staff.

Process and Background

- The Town Council will consider a Grant Project Ordinance for Expenditure of ARP/CSLFRF Funds at its meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 11, 2022, with a potential vote occurring at this meeting or another meeting later this fall. The Town Council will consider adoption of policies and rules required for use of these funds. All meeting materials will be posted at <https://bit.ly/3yjimD0>
- ARPA framework and engagement planning was summarized at the May 24, 2022, meeting of the Town Council.
See https://www.townofcarrboro.org/DocumentCenter/View/11839/ARPA_Engagement

- For more information about the local legislative process, please contact the Town Clerk's Office at publiccomment@carrboronc.gov
- Additional information about the ARPA funding process for the Town of Carrboro is available at <https://www.carrboronc.gov/2583/American-Rescue-Plan>

###