

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT CRIMINAL JUSTICE INVESTMENT SCAN

provided to



GREATER NEW ORLEANS
FUNDERS NETWORK

by



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OVERVIEW

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 is a \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief package designed to facilitate the United States' recovery from the devastating economic and health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Unlike the CARES Act of 2020 which preceded it, ARPA provided \$350 billion in direct funding to states and local governments (State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds or SLFRF) to help compensate for lost revenues and make impactful investments in an equitable recovery. Eligible uses of SLFRF funding must fit into one of four subcategories:

- Respond to the far-reaching public health and negative economic impacts of the pandemic by supporting the health of communities, and helping households, small businesses, impacted industries, nonprofits, and the public sector recover from economic impacts
- Provide premium pay for essential workers
- Replace lost public sector revenue
- Invest in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure.

The four subcategories are split into seven general summary expenditure categories

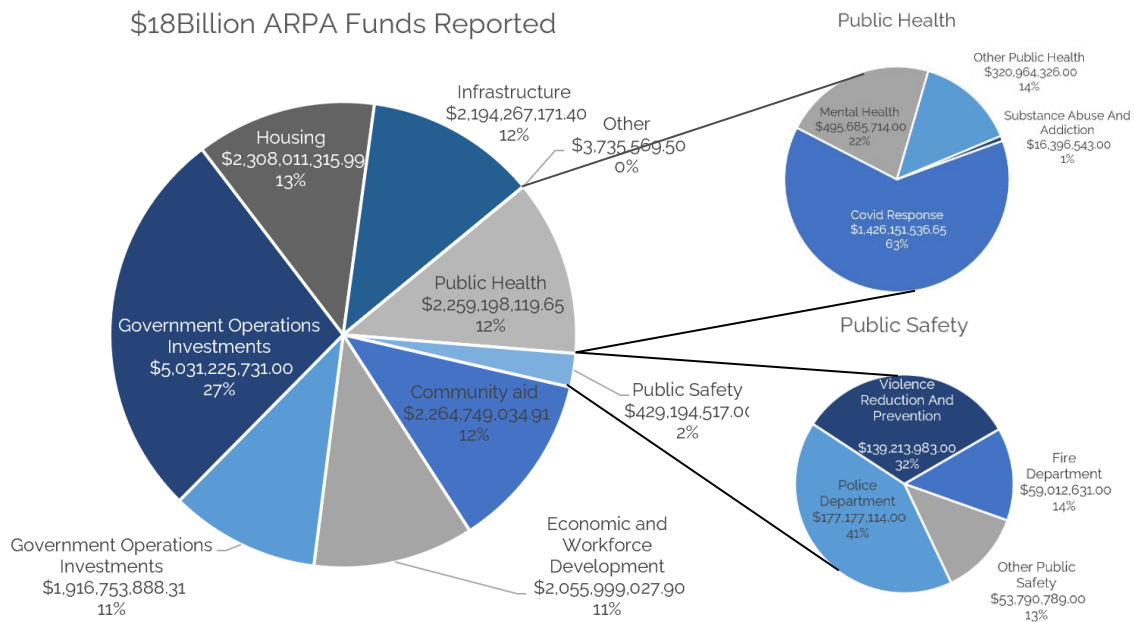
- Public health, including behavioral healthcare and preventing and responding to violence
- Negative Economic Impacts
- Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities
- Premium Pay
- Infrastructure (General infrastructure spending is not covered as an eligible use outside of water, sewer, and broadband investments unless it's under the revenue replacement provision)
- Revenue Replacement
- Administrative

The Greater New Orleans Funders' Network engaged the Thomas Consulting Group to conduct a nationwide analysis of appropriations and local level planned uses of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to make investments in criminal justice reform initiatives. The purpose of the review is to identify promising practices of allowable investments of ARPA funds in initiatives designed to interrupt the traditional criminal legal system in cities across the country with the intent to advocate for similar investments locally. Specifically, GNOFN Criminal Justice Action Table (CJAT) was interested in investments targeting the following programmatic areas:

- Programs designed to dismantle systemic oppression in the criminal legal system
- Alternative responses
- Violence prevention
- Approaches to managing community-based trauma
- Amplified re-entry supports
- Diversion programs
- Youth-focused programs
- Programs focused on women and members of the LGBTQIA+ community that have been impacted by the criminal legal system
- Racial equity programs

The following sections of this report will summarize one promising program/initiative taking place outside of Louisiana in each of the aforementioned areas; promising initiatives within Louisiana; examples of inferior uses of ARPA funding around criminal justice initiatives; and guidance around potential strategies for engaging with the City government and other partners to effectively direct ARPA resources toward CJAT priority areas; including general strategies for potentially partnering with other groups on investing in high-impact ARPA-funded initiatives.

As a starting point for this research, the Brookings Institute’s Local Government ARPA Tracker was used. The available data is incomplete, representing only about 10% of the national allocation due to reporting lags for the SLRF funding, but provides a useful perspective on the initial trends in local jurisdiction spending.¹



¹<https://www.brookings.edu/interactives/arpa-investment-tracker/#:~:text=The%20Local%20Government%20ARPA%20Investment,Local%20Fiscal%20Recovery%20Fund%20dollars.>

PROMISING INITIATIVES OUTSIDE OF LOUISIANA

Programs Designed to Dismantle Systemic Oppression in the Criminal Legal System

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

The City of St. Louis is investing \$5,500,000 in programs designed to be disruptive to the current criminal legal system. “These funds will support multiple RFPs with third party agencies to operate community programs designed to interrupt cycles of violence. The arrest and incarcerate model has failed, but a clear alternative has yet to emerge, making this an ideal moment to test and explore new solutions. RFPs will prioritize data driven public health solutions such as cure violence, as well as efforts to reduce recidivism rates by transferring individuals from a carceral environment which compounds violence and trauma, to an ecosystem of community support designed for restorative justice, which provides them with the resources - housing, addiction treatment, behavioral health services, etc. - they need to re-integrate into our community.”²

St. Louis is a part of the Biden Administration’s Community Violence Intervention Collaborative, a program that brings together officials from 15 jurisdictions across the country that have allocated American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) or other public funding to community violence intervention programs. Other cities include Atlanta, GA; Austin, TX; Baltimore, MD; Baton Rouge, LA; Chicago, IL; Detroit, MI; King County, WA; Los Angeles, CA; Memphis, TN; Minneapolis & St. Paul, MN; Newark, NJ; Rapid City, SD; Philadelphia, PA; and Washington, DC.

Alternative Responses

MADISON, WISCONSIN

In August of 2021, the Mayor of Madison announced the launch a new emergency response team called Madison Community Alternative Response Emergency Services or Madison CARES. The program was designed for residents undergoing a behavioral health crisis and pairs a community paramedic and a Journey Mental Health Crisis worker to respond to nonviolent behavioral health emergencies.

The initiative is run out of the Fire department, with a program supervisor housed in Public Health in Madison Dane County. Madison CARES treats behavioral health emergencies as medical issues and provides responses that are centered on patient needs and patient care, with a focus on linking the patient with appropriate treatment options. This trauma-informed response initiative works to ensure that the right person is sent to each call, and that patient trauma is reduced.

² <https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/recovery/covid-19/arpa/projects/project.cfm?id=44>

The program grew out of the City's effort to create non-law enforcement alternatives for non-violent emergency calls prior to the pandemic. Using ARPA funding to officially launch the initiative arrived at just the right time because for too many COVID has deepened anxiety and despair leading to increase calls for service related to behavioral health needs.

NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK

The City of New York will spend \$112 million to support the newly created Behavioral Health Emergency Assistance Response Division or B-HEARD. B-HEARD is a health-centered alternative 911 response program that responds to emergency calls related to mental health needs or emergencies. B-HEARD was founded in spring of 2021 with a city-funded pilot in East Harlem and parts of Central and North Harlem. This ARPA funding will be used to expand the program to additional areas with the goal of taking the program city-wide.

In areas where B-HEARD operates, 911 call operators dispatch BHEARD Teams—made up of FDNY paramedics and mental health professionals from NYC Health+ Hospitals—as the default first responders to people experiencing a mental health emergency. The B-HEARD teams use their physical and mental health expertise and experience in crisis response to de-escalate emergency situations and provide immediate care. Teams will have the expertise needed to respond to a range of behavioral health problems, such as suicidal ideation, substance misuse, and mental illness, including serious mental illness, as well as physical health problems, which can be exacerbated by or mask mental health problems.

B-HEARD is part of New York City's broader commitment to treat mental health emergencies as a health issue not a public safety issue. Currently, NYPD officers and FDNY EMTs respond to nearly all mental health 911 calls though that is often not the most appropriate form of help for people in a mental health emergency. B-HEARD will help people with emergency mental health needs quickly get health-centered assessments and appropriate care from trained medical and mental health professionals. The City hopes that B-HEARD will reduce unnecessary transports to hospitals and decrease the number of times police must respond to 911 mental health calls.

Violence Prevention

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Funded by \$59,000,000 from the city's ARPA allocation, the Building Blocks DC's (BBDC) Theory of Change is to create sustained reductions in gun violence in the District by providing services and opportunities to support vibrant communities where the residents are empowered to co-create public safety. BBDC's commitment to interrupt violence and provide opportunities to the community is an integral part of the everyday work for each of the team members involved in this initiative. The BBDC team is responsible for the creation of a data informed, evidence-based, and community-empowered strategy. BBDC is centered around an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) infrastructure to allow for a

coordinated collective action. Under this model, BBDC is taking a three-systems approach to reducing gun violence: Person-Based, Place-Based, and Services-Based. As BBDC builds out their processes and data sharing and integrations needs, the OCTO Digital Services team will work to discover automation and integration needs to build a solution that helps the new entity serve its mission.

The Office of Gun Violence Prevention partnered with the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services and Progressive Life Center on the distribution of grants to community members engaged in efforts aimed at reducing gun violence in those neighborhoods most affected. There are two types of grants:

- \$5,000 mini-grants awarded to individuals to create activities that engage residents, leaders, and organizations in promoting public safety.
- \$50,000 grants awarded to entities or organizations who will create innovative programs to reduce gun violence in the District of Columbia. The program should include one or more of the following: skill-building opportunities, neighborhood beautification/restoration, restorative justice support, family connectivity and empowerment, multidisciplinary arts activities, and community engagement.

Earlier this year, the Building Blocks program was restructured and was the subject of a Washington Post article that revealed mixed reviews of the efficacy of the program. What is certain is that using one-time funding to launch such an aggressive program without a clear dedicated funding stream for the long-term is posing a challenge to this promising program.³

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Atlanta received \$170.9 million in ARPA funds. The vast majority of this funding, about \$123 million, has been allocated to replace lost revenue. Of the remainder, \$7.5 million has been dedicated towards public safety and violence prevention.

- \$2.5 million for Operation Shield and the Atlanta Police Department's Video Integration Center to purchase additional surveillance cameras, license plate readers, and other surveillance and monitoring equipment for APD.
- \$5 million for a community-based violence prevention program. The Atlanta Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion is leading this effort along with APD and "community partners."
 - The funding will go towards expanding this existing program to two additional locations in the city.

The amount of funding for public safety and violence prevention is larger than almost any other sub-category. For comparison:

- Affordable housing - \$3.5 million
- Food insecurity - \$2 million
- Workforce development – \$4.7 million

³<https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2022/02/21/crime-shootings-prevention-washington/>

- Youth engagement and employment - \$2 million

The city will also spend an unspecified amount of their ARPA funding to create a gun violence prevention program. The program is a community-based violence intervention program that employs street outreach workers who are charged with mediating conflicts and preventing retaliatory violence between those who are at-risk to commit or become the victims of gun violence.

- Outreach workers will provide violence interruption, conflict resolution, case management, and other supportive services.
- The city plans to deploy the program in two neighborhoods chosen based on an analysis of violent crime data.

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

Mayor Brandon M. Scott has directed \$17.6 million toward the launch of a Group Violence Reduction Strategy (GVRS) and the future expansion of evidence-based community violence intervention (CVI) programming. The City is emphasizing its “intentional and steadfast in our commitment to make Baltimore a safer city for all.” The funds will also support a dramatic expansion of Baltimore’s Community Violence Intervention ecosystem, from 10 to at least 30 contracts with community-based organizations engaged in outreach, mediation, violence intervention, hospital-based violence intervention, life coaching, victim services, and mental health support. In June, the Biden-Harris administration asked Baltimore to join a collaborative, along with 15 other jurisdictions, to expand evidence-based community violence interventions.⁴

In the fall, Mayor Scott announced \$50 million in ARPA funding over the next three years to the Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement (MONSE) to fund violence prevention efforts, including community violence intervention, victim services, youth justice, re-entry, and community healing. This investment will support essential components of the Group Violence Reduction Strategy, expand Baltimore’s community violence intervention ecosystem and victim services, and fund re-entry programs and trauma-informed practices.⁵

Approaches to Managing Community-Based Trauma

MECKLENBURG COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

Mecklenburg County is investing \$4,856,292 to expand the Promise Resource Network, a peer-run crisis prevention, diversion and response program. The funding will continue the peer-run warm-line that serves as the portal for MeckHOPE and a new peer-run respite service that offers a 10-day stay for those

⁴ <https://conduitstreet.mdcounties.org/2022/02/15/baltimore-city-invests-17-6m-in-arpa-funds-to-support-violence-prevention/>

⁵ Ibid.

experiencing a mental health crisis. The warm line allows people experiencing distress to call and talk to a peer anytime day or night. The ARPA funding would expand this service by adding text and chat features. Additionally, the respite program offers a 10 day stay at a healing retreat as an alternative to the emergency department for people experiencing a mental health crisis.

The goal of these investments is to improve behavioral health outcomes by increasing access to resources, services, and programming. Specifically, this investment will employ peer support specialists to reduce waitlists and the need for police interventions, as well as provide hotlines or warmlines for individuals, and expand and promote mental health care and substance abuse treatment options.⁶

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH, LOUISIANA

The EBR consolidated government will spend \$100,000 to expand their existing Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Program. The funding will be used to expand HVIP into additional hospital trauma units and to create a comprehensive evaluation process for the HVIP program.

EBR's HVIP program is a multidisciplinary program that provides safety planning, social services, and trauma-informed care to violently injured people receiving treatment in hospitals. Victims of interpersonal violence--many of whom are Black and brown men and boys--are at elevated risk for both re-injury and violence perpetration. The HVIP program engages these patients in the hospital setting during their recovery process in the hopes of interrupting patterns of violence perpetration, retaliation, and recidivism. Victims are provided with links to community-based services such as mentoring, job-training, and educational support. These services are provided alongside long-term case management that is managed by culturally competent community organizations.

Though this seems like an excellent program, it must be noted that East Baton Rouge's \$100,000 investment in HVIP is dwarfed by the nearly \$10 million being spent on police equipment.

SOUTH BEND, INDIANA

Late last year, officials in South Bend, Indiana, approved \$2.7 million in ARPA funds to open a new crisis center. Under the plan, police who respond to mental-health episodes will have the option of taking the person to the crisis center for treatment instead of arresting them. At the crisis center, mental-health technicians and therapists will work to stabilize the person, usually within 24 hours, according to county documents. Proponents say that approach is not only more compassionate and effective, but also a less costly option than taking people to hospital emergency rooms or housing them at the county jail.⁷

⁶ <https://www.mecknc.gov/Documents/ARPA-Funding-Recommendations-r1.pdf>

⁷ <https://www.southbendtribune.com/story/news/local/2021/12/08/st-joseph-county-council-approves-money-behavioral-crisis-center/6428072001/>

Amplified Re-Entry Supports

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Assistance to Returning Citizens: The District's Recovery Plan includes \$36 million to provide flexible financial assistance, individual financial counseling, and peer navigator services to returning citizens. Each year, on average, there are approximately 6,000 incarcerated individuals released to the DC community, both with and without convictions. The needs of returning citizens are great and include housing, employment, substance abuse and mental health services, and family and community reintegration support. The COVID-19 pandemic both resulted in the compassionate release of some prisoners and exacerbated barriers to successful reentry that returning citizens have historically faced.

The returning citizens population in the District, consistent with national trends, is disproportionately made up of Black and other minority groups. Reentry services provider data indicates a client base that is 95% Black. In addition, formerly incarcerated people are almost 10 times more likely to be homeless than the general public. Flexible financial assistance can be tailored according to individual needs assessments to cover costs associated with obtaining housing and employment, such as assistance with security deposits, financial support for family members providing housing, applications for IDs and other legal documents, Internet connectivity and transportation. This assistance, along with financial counseling and peer navigators, will reduce barriers faced by returning citizens to increase the likelihood of successful reintegration into the community and reduce recidivism and its associated costs.

In addition to the \$36 million in flexible spending for programs serving returning citizens, the District has also allocated \$2,082,304 to provide one on one financial coaching for 1,000 returning citizens over the next 3 years through existing Financial Empowerment Centers. The coaching will provide financial education, access to banking products and services, reduction in recidivism, and development of financial resiliency skills for returning citizens. And additional \$1,916,580 for Returning Citizens Peer Navigators will allow the Mayor's Office on Returning Citizens Affairs to increase successful reentry, reduce recidivism and increase public safety. The navigators will be an additional support system to returning citizens as they encourage, motivate and coach them to connect to and complete services that range from obtaining Identification to job training and placement.

Diversion Programs

TARRANT COUNTY, TEXAS

Tarrant County plans to use \$23.3 million in federal funds from the American Rescue Plan Act to create a mental health diversion center from the jail. County Administrator G.K. Maenius noted that people with mental health problems are being put through the jail system instead of getting the medical help they need. The county's mental health jail diversion program would help people with mental illness get help instead of going to jail for some crimes.

The commissioners court recently approved the creation of the diversion center and to maintain the center for the next two years. “This would help individuals who are arrested for minor charges, such as criminal trespass or disorderly conduct,” said Maenius. “Rather than putting them into the county jail, we would divert them from the criminal justice system in totality and get them the type of mental health care that they need. These individuals are not criminals, they’re just people that need some assistance.”

The facility will be in a building owned by Tarrant County, but the exact location has not yet been determined. The opening date depends on how much repair the building needs. It is anticipated that about 40 beds will be available. The voluntary programs will help provide services for those who might need medications or other help. Those who are diverted will stay in the facility an average of one to three days to get triaged and help, which could include medications and counseling.⁸

Youth-Focused Programs

CUYAHOGA COUNTY, OHIO

Last month, the Cuyahoga County Executive Armond Budish announced an investment of \$5 million to build a first-of-its-kind Youth Diversion Center, mirroring the services of the adult Diversion Center that opened in May of 2021. The County Executive said it will give law enforcement a place to send children in crisis, rather than dropping them at the Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services office building. It is also hoped to divert children from the Juvenile Justice Center, which Budish said is “filled with murderers and rapists,” and instead get them treatment to address underlying addiction, mental health or behavioral issues that might be driving some of the more minor crimes.⁹

The Cuyahoga County Diversion Center is a first-of-its kind facility in Ohio, working with law enforcement to help individuals who are exhibiting signs and symptoms of a mental illness and/or addiction. These individuals receive the help, care and linkage to community resources they need in a treatment environment rather than going to the County jail. The Diversion Center has also expanded eligibility beyond law enforcement referrals to include calls from friends, family members and individuals in need of and wanting care for a mental illness and/or substance use disorder.

The Cuyahoga County Diversion Center is a 50-bed facility, with staff onsite 24/7. Services can include assessment, medical evaluation, case management, counseling, medications, Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT), withdrawal management (detox), NAMI educational groups, referral and linkage to other community services. Treatment costs are covered by Medicaid or the local ADAMHS Board.

⁸ <https://fortworthreport.org/2021/08/05/government-explainer-how-tarrant-county-will-use-23-3-million-in-federal-funds-for-mental-health-services/>

⁹ <https://www.cleveland.com/news/2022/04/cuyahoga-county-officially-announces-86-million-discretionary-funds-with-executive-budishs-share-already-largely-committed.html>

Treatment services are certified through the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS).¹⁰

Programs focused on women and members of the LGBTQIA+ community that have been impacted by the criminal legal system

ANCHORAGE COUNTY, ALASKA

Anchorage County awarded \$500,000 to Choosing Our Roots, a new nonprofit based in Mountainview that helps homeless youth, ages 13-24, who are self-declared to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer.¹¹ The funding will allow the organization to acquire a multi-unit dwelling, which would be used to temporarily house youth participants (ages 18-24) awaiting host home placement. This program seeks to provide safe housing for this vulnerable population who are often the victims of crime, but does not appear to have any requirement that participants have been impacted by the criminal legal system.

ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

The City of Alexandria has invested \$253,000 in ARPA funds to expand the work of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) Task Force. This project will continue essential work to build inclusive and equitable services and increase awareness of City of Alexandria services.

The Task Force began in 2007 as the Alexandria LGBTQ Victim Services Advisory Board and has always been supported through the Alexandria Domestic Violence Program and Sexual Assault Center. The Task Force has partnered with several City agencies and community organizations to train thousands of service providers on how to create a safe and welcoming environment for LGBTQ community members. Service providers include law enforcement, social workers, counselors, advocates, attorneys, teachers, administrators, supervisors, clergy, healthcare professionals, firefighters, and other City employees. What began as a goal within the sexual and domestic violence programs has grown into a City-wide effort. The overarching aspiration continues to be improving services and access to services for LGBTQ people throughout the City. The Task Force trains service providers and organizes local awareness events geared to LGBTQ community members.

Using the ARPA funding, the Task Force has created a more formal Advisory Board with paid stipends and has drafted by-laws. Additionally, the Task Force has used the ARPA funding to facilitate 8 trainings with 76 City staff from DCHS and the Fire Department on creating inclusive and affirming spaces for LGBTQ+ clients/residents/colleagues. The training uses an intersectional lens and centers racial equity as

¹⁰ <https://www.adamhsc.org/about-us/current-initiatives/cuyahoga-county-diversion-center>

¹¹ <https://mustreadalaska.com/american-rescue-plan-act-grant-goes-to-one-nonprofit-that-discriminates-against-straight-youth-in-anchorage/>

well as equity for LGBTQ+ communities. The project will continue facilitating at least one training per month and monitoring evaluation data. 90% of training participants agree that they are more aware of how to create a safer and more inclusive environment for LGBTQ+ clients/colleagues after training.¹²

LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles County is investing \$8.6M to provide a variety of job placement programming for individuals returning from serving sentences in jail or prison, with a focus on women and the LGBTQI+ community, including the Careers for a Cause, Skills and Experience for the Careers of Tomorrow (SECTOR), and Fire Camp programs.

HOUSTON, TEXAS

Houston, Texas will spend \$3,615,822.00 to support their Domestic Abuse Response Team (DART) program. DART is a domestic violence response program in which two-to-three-person mobile teams consisting of an HPD officer, forensic nurse, and victim advocate are deployed to “high risk” domestic violence crime scenes. The DART program was created to respond to an increase in domestic violence related homicides in the Houston metro.

Though DART teams do respond to 911 calls, the program is not an alternative 911 response initiative as the DART teams are only deployed at the request of the primary responding police unit that initially responded to the 911 call. The DART team is a secondary response unit that conducts on-scene danger assessments and provides services for victims. The forensic nurse is responsible for conducting safety assessments and can also testify on the victim’s behalf in court. The victim advocate works to connect victims to supportive emergency, medical, or mental health services in the moment and also provides long-term support by providing referrals to local organizations that can assist victims with emergency shelter, long-term housing, and legal aid.

Racial equity programs

LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

On July 21, 2020, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) unanimously adopted a motion to establish an Anti-Racist County Policy Agenda recognizing, affirming, and declaring that “racism is a matter of public health in Los Angeles County (County) and that racism against Black people has reached crisis proportions that result in large disparities in family stability, health and mental wellness, education, employment, economic development, public safety, criminal justice, and housing.” The Board issued several related directives, including the development of a strategic plan and underlying policy

¹² <https://www.alexandriava.gov/sites/default/files/2022-02/ARPA%20Project%20Report%202.17.22.pdf>

platform, and the establishment of an organizational unit—since established and called the Anti-racism, Diversity, and Inclusion (ARDI) Initiative—within the Chief Executive Office (CEO) dedicated to implementing the plan.¹³

Further, on July 13, 2021, the Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted a motion to strategically use ARPA funds to maximize benefits for communities suffering disproportionate health and economic impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic. The County’s entire \$975M ARPA investment was developed with an equity lens and represents the most comprehensive approach that our research has found to investments in an equitable recovery. Details about their spending plan, including their equity dashboard, can be found here: <https://ceo.lacounty.gov/recovery/arpa/>

INITIATIVES WITHIN LOUISIANA

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH, LOUISIANA

The EBR consolidated government will spend \$100,000 to expand their existing Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Program. The funding will be used to expand HVIP into additional hospital trauma units and to create a comprehensive evaluation process for the HVIP program.

EBR’s HVIP program is a multidisciplinary program that provides safety planning, social services, and trauma-informed care to violently injured people receiving treatment in hospitals. Victims of interpersonal violence—many of whom are Black and brown men and boys—are at elevated risk for both re-injury and violence perpetration. The HVIP program engages these patients in the hospital setting during their recovery process in the hopes of interrupting patterns of violence perpetration, retaliation, and recidivism. Victims are provided with links to community-based services such as mentoring, job-training, and educational support. These services are provided alongside long-term case management that is managed by culturally competent community organizations.

Other criminal justice related investments in East Baton Rouge Parish include:

- \$1.8 million to increase and enhance the BRPD’s technological capabilities, benefiting law enforcement throughout East Baton Rouge Parish including automated license plate readers and technology for strategic community camera programs.
- \$3.3 million to implement gun violence reduction strategies in areas dominated by gun violence and increase community policing.
- \$8 million for the replacement of BRPD patrol units and other vehicles.
- \$100,000 for the Chances-Innovative Gun-Violence Intervention Program administered by the East Baton Rouge Parish District Attorney’s Office (EBRPDA), a program that will target youthful offenders who have been identified as most at risk of either committing a gun violence offense or being victimized by gun violence.

¹³ https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/lac/1123282_DraftLosAngelesCountyRacialEquityStrategicPlan4.21.22.pdf

- \$150,000 for the Innovative Opioid Project which will enable EBRPDA to test, establish, and implement innovative programs focused on public health and public safety enhancements by collecting and sharing data.
- \$500,000 for additional special prosecutors and public defenders on matters relating to the ongoing backlog of cases.
- \$250,000 for youth employment programs that directly address the negative economic impacts of the pandemic on young people and their families and communities.

Though this seems like an excellent program, it must be noted that East Baton Rouge’s \$100,000 investment in HVIP is dwarfed by the nearly \$10 million being spent on police equipment.

SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA

\$13 million will be earmarked for public safety. The Shreveport Police Department and Shreveport Fire Department will each receive \$6.5 million. The police department will use the money to provide take home cars to 185 officers who live within the city limits. Money will also be used for jail upgrades, crime scene vehicles, additional body cameras, radar equipment and new firearms. The fire department will use the money to buy new fire apparatuses, medic units, Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) suits, bunker gear and CPR devices.¹⁴

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

New Orleans will receive a total of \$387,523,049.00 in ARPA funding between its city and parish governments with \$311,742,151 allocated to the City of New Orleans and \$75,780,898 to Orleans Parish.

In Sept. 2021 the Cantrell administration announced that they intended to use much of the FY2021 ARPA funding allocation to replace holes in the city budget created by reduced tourism and sales tax revenues during the pandemic.¹⁵ This funding will be used to supplement the budgets from FY2021 through FY2024. In November 2021, the City Council approved a \$77 million dollar allocation of ARPA funds to replace lost revenues in the city budget. Separately, the City Council also set aside \$5 million in ARPA money to help offset an increase in Entergy New Orleans’s gas rates.¹⁶

¹⁴https://710keel.com/shreveport-rescue-plan-spending/?utm_source=tsmclip&utm_medium=referral

¹⁵ <https://nola.gov/finance/american-rescue-plan-financial-reports/>

¹⁶ https://www.nola.com/news/politics/article_74523e6e-3db1-11ec-9ef6-878913285814.html

October 2021, Planned Use for ARPA Funds¹⁷

ARPA Use	2021	2022	2023
Revenue Gap	\$91,298,871	\$78,759,373	\$23,703,281
Expenditure Gap	\$62,219,690	\$68,855,524	\$63,735,886
TOTAL	\$153,518,561	\$147,614,897	\$87,439,167

2021 New Orleans Mid-Year Budget Adjustment for ARPA Funds¹⁸

Priority	Description	Personal Services	Mid-Year Cost	
			Other Operating	Total
Quality of Life	CleanUpNOLA Operations	\$300,000	\$2,700,000	\$3,000,000
Restore Government Operations	Sanitation	-	\$3,640,000	\$3,640,000
Restore Government Operations	Public safety building repairs and HVAC	-	\$715,268	\$715,268
Restore Government Operations	Cemetery Operations	\$51,352	-	\$51,352
Restore Government Operations	Electrician, Carpenter, and Maintenance Engineers	\$62,187	-	\$62,187
Quality of Life	Judgement List	-	\$5,849,291	\$5,849,291
Quality of Life	Early Childhood Education	-	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000
Restore Government Operations	Vehicles and Equipment	-	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000
Restore Government Operations	Risk Management – Safety Officer	\$20,500	-	\$20,500
Public Safety	NOPD Personnel	\$3,100,000	-	\$3,100,000
Public Safety	Senior Police Officer Promotions	\$300,000	-	\$300,000
Public Safety	License Plate Readers	-	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Public Safety	Critical ITI Operational Support*	-	\$594,000	\$594,000
Public Safety	Retention and Overtime	\$6,000,000	-	\$6,000,000
Public Safety	OPCD Payment	-	\$379,191	\$379,191
Public Safety	Staffing Enhancement	\$1,300,000	-	\$1,300,000
Public Safety – New Initiatives	Alternative Dispatch Program	\$40,000	\$235,000	\$275,000
Restore Government Operations	Brownfields	\$18,750	-	\$18,750
Restore Government Operations	Master Plan Revision	\$67,500	-	\$67,500
Restore Government Operations	Restore Basic Operations	\$93,750	-	\$93,750

¹⁷ http://cityofno.granicus.com/GeneratedAgendaViewer.php?clip_id=a40b2696-3132-4fa1-b6df-7d4b388fa0f2

¹⁸ Ibid.

Priority	Description	Personal Services	Mid-Year Cost		Total
			Other	Operating	
Restore Government Operations	Lot Abatement Program	\$41,250	-		\$41,250
Restore Government Operations	Data and Strategic Development Compliance	\$60,000			\$60,000
Restore Government Operations	Zoning	\$38,363	-		\$38,363
Restore Government Operations	Short Term Rentals	\$88,726	-		\$88,726
Restore Government Operations	Plan Review	\$86,444	-		\$86,444
Restore Government Operations	Adjudication	\$47,597	-		\$47,597
Restore Government Operations	Permitting	\$57,223	-		\$57,223
Restore Government Operations	Technology and Equipment	-	\$900,000		\$900,000
Public Safety - New Initiatives	Restorative Justice	-	\$300,000		\$300,000
Restore Government Operations	Core Functions	-	\$1,271,666		\$1,271,666
Public Safety - New Initiatives	Municipal Court Mental Health	-	\$116,667		\$116,667
Public Safety - New Initiatives	Ramos & COVID-19 Backlog	-	\$141,500		\$141,500
Restore Government Operations - LASPCA	Restore Critical Operations	-	\$150,000		\$150,000
Restore Government Operations - OPSO	Support operations and hire additional deputies	-	\$7,360,000		\$7,360,000
Restore Government Operations - Juvenile Court	Provide 25% of 2021 budget reduction	-	\$170,000		\$170,000
Restore Government Operations - Municipal and Traffic Court	Provide 25% of 2021 budget reduction	-	\$410,000		\$410,000
Restore Government Operations - Criminal Court	Provide 25% of 2021 budget reduction	-	\$250,000		\$250,000
TOTAL		\$11,773,642	\$29,682,583		\$41,456,225

New Orleans City Council Plan to Reduce Violent Crime

On February 3, 2022 the New Orleans City Council released a set of recommendations for the addressing violent crime in New Orleans.¹⁹ The recommendations largely centered around data and systems transparency for existing court operations and programs (including youth programs) as well as the need to overhaul the operations and culture of the NOPD. Absent in these recommendations was an emphasis on alternative response, diversion programs, re-entry support, or community-based trauma reduction.

ARPA FUNDING USES FOR STATUS QUO INITIATIVES

According to Forbes, at least 17 states across the US are angling to use at least \$830 million of their federal Covid relief funds to build new jails and prisons, ranging from tiny \$8,000 projects to the hundreds of millions. These funds would all come from the near party-line passage of The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).²⁰ In January 2022, the US Department of Treasury issued additional guidance stating:

“[...] the following capital projects are generally ineligible: Construction of new correctional facilities as a response to an increase in rate of crime [and] Construction of new congregate facilities to decrease the spread of COVID-19 in the facility... because such construction is expected to be more costly than alternative approaches that may be equally or more effective in decreasing the spread of the disease.”

Nonetheless, traditional investments in law enforcement equipment, facilities, and salaries remain allowable expenses. While deferred maintenance on equipment and facilities is a chronic problem for local governments, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic relief funds, these investments extend beyond the conventional upgrades to HVAC systems and essential worker pay. This condition is prevalent in the Louisiana investments outlined below.

STATE OF ALABAMA

Governor Kay Ivey of Alabama announced a plan to build three large new prisons, in Elmore County, Escambia County, and Bibb County in 2020.²¹ Although the facilities were to be situated on state property, they would be financed by private underwriters and constructed by private companies,

¹⁹ <https://files.constantcontact.com/0ea4ccd8001/273879c4-5015-419d-aac1-3ba28ab1ef89.pdf>

²⁰ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/morgansimon/2022/01/19/jails-in-jeopardy-following-new-treasury-rule-federal-covid-relief-must-help-people/?sh=659d85c14b9e>

²¹ <https://governor.alabama.gov/newsroom/2020/09/governor-ivey-announces-next-phase-of-alabama-prison-program/>

including CoreCivic—the second-largest private prison company in the U.S.. The state Legislature approved \$400 million in ARPA money to fund the prison projects.²² The State of Alabama is in the process of contesting the aforementioned clarification from the Department of Treasury.

EL PASO COUNTY, COLORADO

El Paso County, Colorado plans to use \$30 million, roughly 20% of its total allocation to fund the sheriff's office operation of the jail. The Sheriff's Office also operates one of the largest jails in the country. The maximum capacity of the jail is around 1,800 people and was often over-capacity before the pandemic. The use of funds will focus on providing a safe environment for deputies and citizens housed in the jail. The death of Sheriff's deputy Jeff Hopkins after contracting COVID-19 in the line of duty garnered public sympathy for this use. The proper jail administration is always crucial for public safety, but, according to the Sheriff's Office, operating a jail during a global pandemic requires additional policies, procedures, and large expenditures. COVID-19 related jail spending demands include frequent testing, quarantine needs, and other costs associated with mitigating infection in a congregate setting.²³

EAU CLAIRE, WISCONSIN

In Eau Claire County, Wisconsin, Sheriff Ron Cramer announced a plan in the fall of 2021 to use \$6.2 million in ARPA funds to expand the local jail, arguing that the expansion was needed to manage COVID-19 risks.²⁴ The expansion project include the addition of 14 holding cells to the booking area and full fourth cell pod. The Sheriff explained "With COVID, this would be very very helpful for to isolate people for 10 to 14 days before they go into the general population." Operation of the fourth pod would cost taxpayers an additional \$2.4 million annually. Cramer said he also wants to use federal stimulus dollars to give all Sheriff's Office employees a one-time \$5,000 bonus rewarding them for their hard work throughout the pandemic.²⁵

MULTIPLE JURISDICTIONS

Private companies such as ShotSpotter, which sells gunshot detection devices, are proactively marketing to cities to encourage the acquisition of their equipment. As of March 23, 2022 law enforcement purchases of ShotSpotter made with ARPA funds include:

- \$3 million in Albuquerque, New Mexico;

²²<https://theappeal.org/covid-funds-police-prisons-arpa/>

²³ https://issuu.com/elpasocounty/docs/2021_arpa_recovery_performance_plan_report?mode=window

²⁴ <https://theappeal.org/covid-funds-police-prisons-arpa/>

²⁵<https://www.weau.com/2021/09/30/eau-claire-county-sheriff-proposes-jail-expansion/#:~:text=EAU%20CLAIRE%2C%20Wis.%20%28WEAU%29%20-%20The%20Eau%20Claire,add%2014%20holding%20cells%20to%20the%20booking%20area.>

- \$2 million in Macon-Bibb County, Georgia;
- \$1.2 million in New Haven, Connecticut;
- \$171,000 in Syracuse, New York; and
- a proposed \$7 million in Detroit.²⁶

CALIFORNIA CITIES

According to the Guardian, who performed a statewide review in California, several notable metropolitan areas have prioritized status quo public safety related investments

- San Francisco received \$312m in ARPA funds for fiscal year 2020 and allocated 49% (\$153m) to police, 13% (\$41m) to the sheriff's department, and the remainder to the fire department.
- Los Angeles spent roughly 50% of its first round of ARPA relief funds on the LAPD.
- San Jose allocated roughly \$27.8m of its Cares and ARPA funds to police salaries and the police dispatch department, representing about 12% of its relief money.
- Long Beach allocated the majority of its \$135.8 million ARPA funds to police, though a spokesperson said a detailed breakdown of funds was not available.²⁷

STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGEMENT

New Orleans's Process for Allocating Funding

In spring 2021, the Mayor's office established a taskforce to offer recommendations on how the city-parish government should spend ARPA funding.²⁸ The 28-member task force will focus on five key areas: case management, community services, the workforce, economic recovery investments, and public health. A detailed description of the task force's history and structure is detailed in [this report](#) from the city's Dept. of Finance. A few key highlights:

- A working group has been formed for each of the five areas of focus (e.g. a case management working group, a community services working group, etc.)
- Some working groups have subcommittees, like the Social Determinants of Health subcommittee within the public health working group

²⁶ <https://theappeal.org/covid-funds-police-prisons-arpa/>

²⁷ <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2022/apr/07/covid-relief-funds-california-cities-police>

²⁸ https://www.nola.com/news/coronavirus/article_9388c410-9e1f-11eb-851b-13b9a30bb486.html

Mayor's Priorities for FY2022 ARPA Funding

In February 2022, Mayor Cantrell released a plan to hire and retain more public safety workers in New Orleans. As a part of this plan, Cantrell would like to spend nearly \$18 million on police officer bonuses, and she has expressed an interest in funding these bonuses with ARPA dollars.²⁹ Officers who have been with the force for twenty years or more could receive as much as \$20,000 under the mayor's proposal. Following the Mayor's announcement, Mike Glasser, the president of the Police Association of New Orleans, has said he does not believe low compensation is behind NOPD's recruitment and retention issues.³⁰

Other Influences on ARPA Funding Allocation

In March 2022, New Orleans was selected to participate in the Southern Cities for Economic Inclusion initiative by the National League of Cities. As part of the program, the city will receive guidance and technical assistance on how to use ARPA funding to support economic inclusion and sustainability.³¹

Recommendations

It is likely that the City of New Orleans will release additional spending plans to the public before the end of May 2022. It is not expected that these plans will be exhaustive or in such detail that every dollar will be accounted for, presenting an opportunity for collaboration.

It is recommended that GNOFN create an opportunity to engage with the mayor and her team to discuss strategies for deploying funding towards specific initiatives, however that window of opportunity is short. More specifically, it is recommended that after additional detail is released to the public that the Criminal Justice Action Table and the Black Men and Boys Action Table request a meeting with Mayor Cantrell through her Chief of Staff. Care should be taken to limit the size of the group, to begin to establish a relationship with the mayor and her team. As the interactions continue, the group could expand, as appropriate. The purpose of this initial meeting would be to begin a dialogue around how the investments could have generational impact, to gather additional information about her thoughts on where the funds will be invested, and to identify opportunities for collaboration.

Finally, our general observation is that municipalities and parishes in Louisiana have not been as transparent with spending plans, nor has there been significant public engagement in visioning how the funds could be used to achieve enduring impact. There is an opportunity for GNOFN and/or its partners to advocate for greater transparency and community engagement in designing investment frameworks that can direct portions of the spending towards projects/initiatives that are a priority for the citizens.

²⁹ https://www.nola.com/news/politics/article_5bfc227a-8920-11ec-8928-938aa92e86c3.html

³⁰ <https://tulanehullabaloo.com/59147/news/mayor-wants-arpa-funds-for-police-raises-as-crime-rockets/>

³¹ <https://nola.gov/mayor/news/march-2022/new-orleans-selected-to-participate-in-economic-inclusion-initiative/>