

City of Fort Wayne, Indiana
American Rescue Plan Act | State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds
Recovery Plan

as of April 12, 2022



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Executive Summary

The City of Fort Wayne, Indiana (the “City”) is a recipient of \$50.8 million in State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (“SLFRF”) from the American Rescue Plan Act (“ARPA”) (as herein described, see “Introduction” section).

As expressed in his State of the City address on February 16, 2022, Mayor Henry’s top priority is meeting the needs of residents, organizations, and businesses throughout the COVID-19 pandemic while increasing long-term community resiliency against negative effects of similar potential future events. The City Administration is focused on opportunities for economic development, neighborhood infrastructure improvements, public safety, and parks.

The City of Fort Wayne is proud to present its Recovery Plan, adopted by City Council on April 12, 2022. This plan was developed with extensive participation from City administration, department leaders, Council members and valuable members of the community. The City recognizes its allotment of recovery funds is an extraordinary opportunity to support Fort Wayne’s tremendous growth and pandemic recovery.

The result of the planning efforts identified the four following key investment areas, or focal points for the City’s approach to using its allocation of SLFRF:

City of Fort Wayne Total SLFRF Allotment **\$50.8 Million**



**Build Strong and Healthy
Communities
\$13.0M**



**Strengthen
Neighborhoods
\$18.2M**



**Re-Energize
Our City
\$6.3M**



**Secure Resilient City
Operations
\$13.3M**

Introduction

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (“Act” or “ARPA”) was signed into law on March 11, 2021. This Act provides emergency relief to individuals, organizations, and governments in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As part of ARPA, the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (“SLFRF”) was created to deliver \$350 billion to eligible state, local, and Tribal governments across the country to support their response to and recovery from the COVID-19 public health emergency. The SLFRF program aims to equip governments with the resources to:

- Mitigate the public health and economic impacts of the pandemic on its community;
- Maintain vital public services; and
- Build recovery efforts that support long-term growth and opportunity.

The City of Fort Wayne, Indiana (the “City”) was allocated \$50.8 million in SLFRF monies for investment in projects and programs across the City that align to the four main eligible uses of SLFRF.

ARPA State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds: Eligible Uses¹

**Eligible Use #1:
Negative Economic Impact**
To respond to the *public health emergency* or its *negative economic impacts*, including assistance to households, small businesses, and nonprofits, or aid to impacted industries such as tourism, travel, and hospitality

**Eligible Use #2:
Premium Pay**
To respond to workers *performing essential work* during the COVID-19 public health emergency by providing premium pay to eligible workers of the recipient, or by providing grants to eligible employees that have performed essential work

**Eligible Use #3:
Infrastructure**
To make necessary investments in *water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure*

**Eligible Use #4:
Lost Revenue**
For the *provision of government services* to the extent of the *reduction in revenue* due to the COVID-19 public health emergency relative to revenues collected in the most recent full fiscal year prior to the emergency

In developing the SLFRF program, the United States Treasury (“Treasury”) recognizes that the pandemic caused severe economic damage and impacted many American households and businesses. Some of the most severe impacts fell on low-income and underserved communities, where pre-existing disparities were amplified by the impact of the pandemic. Treasury describes this audience as *impacted*.¹ Additionally, the pandemic caused more severe impacts in certain communities, such as higher rates of COVID-19 mortality and unemployment, often exacerbated by pre-existing disparities. Treasury describes this audience

as ***disproportionately impacted***.¹ As such, the SLFRF program guidance encourages recipients to target investments that will serve communities that were impacted and disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

This Plan was developed with extensive participation from City administration, department leaders, Council members and community leaders. Since August 2021, the City has engaged with various community stakeholders to gather information on the specific needs of business and organization leaders, community officials, and residents themselves to help develop its planned uses for ARPA funding. When developing the Plan, the City has also considered projects (designated by “*” throughout the Plan) that have the potential to leverage partnerships with Allen County, given Allen County’s allocation of SLFRF dollars, which is based on population, is largely attributable to the population of the City of Fort Wayne.

After gathering community input, the City sought to align community need with SLFRF eligible uses and U.S. Treasury guidance. The result of the planning efforts identified four key investment areas, or focal points for the City’s approach to using its allocation of SLFRF: 1) Build Strong & Healthy Communities, 2) Strengthen Neighborhoods, 3) Re-Energize Our City, and 4) Secure Resilient City Operations.

The following section outlines each key investment area. Each section denotes the total allocation for the investment area as well as highlights some of the key projects or initiatives the City plans to implement over the next few years². Expenditures are subject to Council approval and appropriation.

¹ Source: <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/SLFRF-Final-Rule.pdf>

² Under SLFRF, funds must be used for eligible costs incurred on or after March 3, 2021. Further, costs must be obligated by December 31, 2024, and expended by December 31, 2026. Source: <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/SLFRF-Final-Rule-Overview.pdf>

Build Strong and Healthy Communities

Allocation: \$13,030,000



Goals

- Improve community mental health
- Improve access to healthcare and vaccines
- Improve access to healthy, fresh, and affordable food
- Improve access to free and safe outdoor greenspace

Key Stakeholders

- Mayor's Office
- Community Development
- Police & Fire Departments
- Parks and Recreation
- Area Non-Profit Organizations
- City Residents

Planned Project / Program Inventory

Mayor's Youth Engagement Council Mental Health Symposium

The Mayor's Youth Engagement Council will host an interactive discussion with guest speakers and professionally led breakout sessions around awareness of different factors of mental health, with the goal of raising awareness to encourage students to take the first step in acknowledging and addressing their mental wellness and providing techniques and resources to help.

Public Safety Mental Health Specialist Expansion

Fort Wayne Police Department (FWPD) plans to leverage SLFRF to add an additional social worker to assist in addressing the increase in cases of mental health related issues incurred by the FWPD Crisis Intervention Team since the onset of COVID-19. The additional position will help to alleviate the over-capacity strain traditional mental health providers face due to the increase in demand brought on by the pandemic. The program aims to expand its reach to communities disproportionately impacted by the pandemic as job loss, housing instability, and other adverse variables have disproportionately impacted several of our communities.

Super Shot Support

The City will partner with Super Shot, a community-based public health organization to provide support for necessary vaccinations and shots to the community with the goal of increasing accessibility and affordability of vaccines community-wide.

Public Health Organization Support *

The City will develop a grant program targeted to public health organizations providing services to prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19, as well as the health-related contributing factors leading to disproportionate COVID-19 impacts on certain communities. The program will

target organizations serving populations that have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

Southeast Grocery Store

To help combat the adverse impacts of food deserts, the City will incubate a full-service grocery in the southeast area of Fort Wayne. Many of these neighborhoods currently lack access to fresh, healthy, and affordable food. The grocery store plan is based off an existing model implemented in other cities in the Midwest and includes a mobile market to further increase accessibility to less-mobile populations. Access to a neighborhood market can have a positive impact on health conditions, job opportunities, and well-being of the neighborhood.

Pedestrian Accessibility Enhancements

Investing in ways to make our City more walkable and pedestrian-friendly provides multiple benefits, from pedestrian safety to building more livable communities. A takeaway from our pandemic experience is that our community demands more opportunities to get outside and get moving! In conjunction with our Walk Fort Wayne and Bike Fort Wayne Plans, the City has identified several trails for either expansion and improvement, or new construction. Trail enhancements will provide crucial connections to schools, parks, groceries, schools, social services, and local businesses.

Franke Park Improvements

The City plans to address two major challenges Franke Park is currently facing in Phase I of its Master Plan: parking and circulation. A new entrance to the park will relieve busy traffic pressure around the Fort Wayne Children’s Zoo. A reorganization of current parking areas, including the relocation of the park maintenance facility, will provide more spaces and alleviate congestion near current entrances. A new pedestrian circulation system will allow for safe access throughout the park, including improved hiking and mountain biking trails and a bike park. This plan will increase ease of access and usability of this large and diverse park.



Firefighter Personal Protective Equipment

A self-contained breathing apparatus (“SCBA”) is a critical tool for firefighter safety, helping to protect firefighters against cancer-causing toxic inhalants and airborne pathogens. The latest generation of SCBAs allows firefighters to operate inside a hazard zone while being able to monitor the breathing air available and alert others if they are trapped. However, the current inventory of SCBAs use regulators which are shared between firefighters, increasing the risk of transmittable infections like COVID-19. New SCBAs will feature removable regulators to keep firefighters safe, both immediately and long-term.



Strengthen Neighborhoods

Allocation: \$18,230,000



Goals

- Improve neighborhood safety
- Improve neighborhood infrastructure
- Improve neighborhood greenspaces
- Improve neighborhood cohesion and social capital

Key Stakeholders

- Department of Public Works
- Department of Redevelopment
- Department of Community Development
- Parks and Recreation
- Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council
- City Residents

Planned Project / Program Inventory

Neighborhood Infrastructure

The City will provide funding to neighborhoods to make necessary improvements to sidewalks, alleys, and more. With input from City Council, the City is committed to allocating funds in an equitable manner across our districts, targeting areas of the greatest need.

Green Infrastructure *

The City plans to coordinate with the Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council to explore replacing traditional storm drains with more ecologically friendly wetlands. This approach aims at reducing erosion and the damage that occurs when stormwater exceeds drain capacity, resulting in flooding.

Sewer Infrastructure *

At present, the existing sanitary sewer capacity in the southeast side of Fort Wayne is not suitable to meet the needs of any large-scale development. Investing in critical infrastructure to expand and extend wastewater capacity to this key area enhances the City's ability to attract manufacturing and industrial companies. Securing new employment centers brings higher paying jobs to the southeast area.

Neighborhood Parks Improvements

The recently completed Master Plans for various neighborhood parks envision areas that will better serve its patrons, and celebrate the people, culture, and history of the neighborhoods. The planning process sought public input from neighborhood leaders and residents surrounding neighborhood parks to address needs for a safe space where youth and families can gather. For the parks to continue to be a community hub that serves as a place for residents to exercise and spend healthy time outdoors, the City plans to leverage SLFRF to implement park

improvements that may include playgrounds, a splash pad, covered pavilion, restrooms, walking paths, sport fields and courts, gardens and more. The goal of the planned improvements to various neighborhood parks are to build social capital and neighborhood cohesion.

Re-Energize Our City

Allocation: \$6,300,000



Goals

- Support small businesses
- Support non-profits
- Support tourism
- Support city-wide economic development

Key Stakeholders

- Area Non-Profit Organizations
- Area Small Businesses
- Visitors
- Community Development
- City Residents

Planned Project / Program Inventory

Small Business Community Support *

The City will develop a grant program targeted to small businesses in specific industries that were disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 such as the food and beverage industry, hospitality industry, and others. The grant program will also support start-ups in the early stages of organizational development to position new businesses for success. Program funds will target start-up costs, marketing, and operations. The grant program will renew the community’s entrepreneurial spirit and benefit the local economy.

Non-Profit Community Support *

The City will develop a grant program targeted to non-profits who support causes and/or populations disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.



Tourism Support *

The City will develop a grant program targeted to organizations whose services support our arts and cultural offerings across the City, attract visitors, and drive tourism to boost our local economy. Examples include performing arts, sporting event venues, festivals, and other events and venues.

Streetscape Improvements

Streetscapes are a tool to help cities revitalize a public space and boost the local economy. They are an amenity that not only enhances an area's aesthetic quality but encourages civic and economic activity on a street. The City has several areas that will benefit from streetscape improvements, including critical economic development corridors that will help re-energize our efforts to attract businesses and visitors alike.



Secure Resilient City Operations

Allocation: \$13,250,327



Goals

- Ensure continuity and safety of City operations
- Improve community health and safety

Key Stakeholders

- City Administration
- City Utilities
- Departments of Public Works and Solid Waste
- Police Department
- Animal Care & Control
- City Residents

Planned Project / Program Inventory

City Cybersecurity *

Building a strong cyber resilience program is now a foundation for government agencies to proactively combat cyber threats such as ransomware attacks. The pandemic exacerbated the shift of more government services through digital platforms, and in turn, data breaches have increased in both frequency and complexity. The City's computing infrastructure is the backbone of both City and County government services. A prolonged interruption or outage would also affect water, sewer, and storm utilities. Strengthening and modernizing our City's technology infrastructure will provide assurance that continuity of critical government services to our citizens are maintained. Cybersecurity improvements planned for the City include updating desktop resources, computer network core, edge, and cabling infrastructure, as well as upgrades to critical data centers.

Solid Waste Operations

Solid waste hauling contractors experienced supply chain issues and staffing shortages during the pandemic which greatly exacerbated an already-challenged daily service across the City. By the end of 2021, the City intervened with operations, utilizing its own fleet vehicles and personnel to supplement solid waste hauling to prevent further public health impacts. To reform operations and reduce further hardship for ratepayers, the City seeks to use SLFRF funding to supplement the cost of solid waste collections and disposal.

Public Safety Technology Upgrades

Investment in technology upgrades for both on-site training facilities and virtual platforms, provide the City's public safety departments with the necessary resources to limit further disruptions to critical training curriculum, due to the pandemic. It also ensures training divisions may continue to provide high standards of excellence while meeting state training mandates and provide important community services, including procedural justice training.

Animal Foster Program Capacity Expansion

The pandemic generated an unprecedented demand for foster animals and placed a capacity strain on both area veterinarian clinics and the City's Animal Care & Control spay and neuter operations. As household routines began to return to pre-pandemic schedules, there has been a significant number of 'pandemic pets' surrendered to local shelters. If left unmanaged, this may increase the population of stray animals and create other unwanted public health issues. The City seeks to use SLFRF to increase the capacity of our fostering program through space enhancements, additional staff, equipment, and volunteer training.

Federal Grant Administration

To maximize effective use of federal funding, the City will allocate a nominal portion of SLFRF to cover the costs associated with grants administration. This includes the creation of a new City Grant Administrator position and support from professional service consultants. Grant administration includes supporting the development (and subsequent updates) of the recovery plan, program and project development, grant program application, evaluation and award management, compliance reporting, program monitoring for City-led projects, and subrecipient monitoring over the multi-year federal program timeline.

Community Engagement

The City values engagement from a variety of stakeholders, including members of the Council and administration, departmental staff, partner agencies, and the community.

To better evaluate the needs of the community, the City administered a survey in October 2021 and invited a variety of stakeholders to provide their feedback on the best uses of recovery funds. Stakeholders included a diverse array of business, not-for-profits, and neighborhood organizations.

In addition, the City has met with many area businesses and organizations to hear firsthand accounts of the impact the pandemic has had on their operations over the past two years.

With community input in hand, the City facilitated a strategy session with key City division leaders to prioritize projects that will have the greatest benefit to City residents and have the potential for completion within the U.S. Department of Treasury guidelines. The outcome of this strategy session was a comprehensive, prioritized list of potentially eligible projects, many of which are included within this Recovery Plan.

City Council members have been engaged throughout the development of the Recovery Plan, to provide inputs on the needs of the community members they represent, to solicit feedback on the prioritization of uses of funding, and progress updates.

This recovery plan and any subsequent updates are available via the City of Fort Wayne's website. The City will continue to engage with all key stakeholders as it implements the plan.

Labor Practices

For all infrastructure projects, the City of Fort Wayne will utilize all current and applicable local, state, and federal policies and procedures for doing business with the city and federally funded. At publication, this includes the following:

- Vendor Compliance for Federal Projects – <https://www.cityoffortwayne.org/federal-projects.html>
- Fort Wayne Buy Indiana Program – [Declaration of Indiana Business](#)
- Fort Wayne [Standard Terms and Conditions](#)

Use of Evidence

The Recovery Plan will, where relevant, employ the use of various methods for collecting and verifying evidence, which may include, but are not limited to logic models, federal clearinghouses, and learning agendas. Attention will be given to scientifically valid methods for collecting data. It is recognized that projects may be selected to participate in a national evaluation that would study the project along with similar projects in other jurisdictions to compare and determine efficacy.

Allocations by Treasury Expenditure Category

ID #	Expenditure Category**	Allocation (\$)
1	Public Health	\$5,000,000
2	Negative Economic Impacts	\$6,030,000
3	Public Sector Capacity	-
4	Premium Pay	-
5	Infrastructure	\$9,935,000
6	Revenue Replacement	\$27,350,327
7	Administrative and Other	\$2,500,000
	Grand Total	\$50,815,327

***Note – On February 28, 2022, Treasury revised its ARPA SLFRF guidance and modified the eligible expenditure categories. Revised categories are effective as of April 1, 2022.*



**Special thanks to:
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