



Recovery Plan

State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

2022 Report

The County of Rockland
2022 Recovery Plan

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General Overview

Executive Summary

As the County continues to navigate through the SLFRF expenditures, we will continue to conduct participatory meetings with various stakeholders. The County, all branches of Government, and community members/organizations, share a common goal of successfully reviving and rebuilding the County of Rockland. Together, we will maintain a focus on promoting resilience, bridging County-wide gaps, fostering mutual working relationships, and establishing community level buy-in to build a healthier and sustainable environment within the County of Rockland.

Uses of Funds

The County of Rockland, through the ARPA department, has maintained a clear objective to uphold a continuous emphasis of encouraging a renewed focus on human rights, equal and equitable opportunity, cultural competence, and humility while allocating SLFRF funds. It is our goal, through our SLFRF use of funds and looking through the lens of many social determinants of health, that we as a county create a **Whole Person, Whole Community, Whole County** approach to reviving and rebuilding Rockland.



Socioecological Conditions and Aid to the Community

- **Public Health (EC 1):** Continued monitoring of COVID-19 cases through the County dashboard will guide in the distribution of Personal Protective Equipment as well as evaluating any other COVID-19 mitigation efforts that may aid in the reduction of increased cases. Furthermore, by surveying the community, both in person and through a digital platform, the County will be better equipped to identify any other public health services.
- **1.1 COVID-19 Vaccination (Mobile Vaccination Van and Shelter)**
 - As the many variants of the COVID-19 virus made their way to Rockland County, it became evident that the disproportionately affected communities were those of a lower socioeconomic status, a more confined built environment, and individuals who had reduced access to testing and care. The drive through vaccination shelter and mobile vaccine clinic would allow the Department of Health to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, flu epidemic, and any other critical public health needs directly into the communities that need them the most. Providing a quicker, more accessible response.
- **1.5 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE Bags)**
 - The County of Rockland used SLFRF funding to purchase and distribute Personal Protective Equipment to various individuals and community organizations between March 3, 2021, and December 31, 2021, throughout all of Rockland County.
- **1.8 COVID-19 Assistance to Small Businesses (Reviving Rockland Restaurant Grant)**
 - This Grant Program was established to combat the negative economic and employment impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, restaurants were one of the first establishments to be shut down and the last to be open at full capacity. Results from our survey to restaurants identified that the outdoor dining option was what enabled them to stay afloat during one of their most fiscally difficult times, while keeping their entire staff, even with limited capacity. With the extreme popularity of outdoor dining options and increased capacity opportunities, the County recognized the need to keep the momentum going by creating a grant to help alleviate the additional costs of associated outdoor dining expenses. Individual grants, to reimburse past expenses or fund future expenses related to outdoor dining, will be awarded to select applicants who meet the eligibility requirements. Applicants must describe how the COVID-19 Pandemic negatively affected their business and how the eligible items helped or will help resolve the problem. They must include information about how outdoor dining sustained or helped to sustain their business, how outdoor dining helped their staff maintain employment, what percentage of their staff lives in the County of Rockland, how much their staff is paid (excluding tips), and if health benefits are available through their business for staff and their families.

- Eligible entities are Rockland based businesses that are not permanently closed, have the capacity for outdoor dining, and include businesses where the public or patrons assemble for the primary purpose of being served food or drink including, Restaurants, Food stands, food trucks, Bars, saloons, lounges, taverns, Bakeries, Delis, Cafes, Breweries, Wineries and/or microbreweries, Other similar places of business in which the public or patrons assemble for the primary purpose of being served food or drink. The *Reviving Rockland Restaurants Grant Program* aims to provide funding for Rockland County restaurants by reimbursing qualified restaurant expenses that were or will be used for outdoor dining to aid in the prevention of the spread of COVID-19. This equipment includes, but is not limited to tents, heat lamps or other electric heating equipment, additional tables and chairs for outdoor dining, market umbrellas, plexiglass shields, tarps, patio fencing, other items related to outdoor dining, such as construction of outdoor seating and cleaning materials may be considered.
- **1.11 Community Violence Interventions**
 - Preventing and responding to Community Violence is paramount in ensuring a safe built environment. As referenced in the Final Rule, Community Violence is a public health challenge that was exacerbated by the pandemic and has disproportionately impacted low-income communities. Exposure to violence can create serious short-term and long-term harmful effects to health and development, and repeated exposure to violence may be connected to negative health outcomes. Addressing community violence as a public health issue may help prevent and even reduce additional harm to individuals, households, and communities. The County of Rockland plans to use SLFRF funds to invest in holistic approaches in violence prevention that are rooted in targeted outreach and addressing root causes.
 - In 2020 the County of Rockland, led by our DSS department, surveyed the community to identify trends believed to be the cause in the uptick in community violence. Respondents varied from young adults/parents to community members/government agencies that encompassed a wide range of our towns, villages, and municipalities. The survey asked a variety of questions to determine a sense of how this current focusing event has affected our communities and asked for solutions that many believed could help alleviate the issue. While aggregating the data, the County found a large majority stated that drugs, gangs, easy access to guns, poverty, lack of youth programming, lack of social cohesion, and an unsafe built environment were the predominant contributing factors towards the increase in community violence. Solutions believed to potentially eradicate this ever-growing concern would include a focus on cultural competence, community buy-in, and constructing a better, safer built environment.



- Our method will use public health frameworks and evidence-based practices to interrupt the spread of violence. The proposed *Transformational Impacts Program* will identify the root cause of violence in individuals, households, and communities, using the socioecological framework (SEF) and nationally recognized, evidence-based methodologies (Community Youth Mapping, CURE Violence Global). Through a better understanding of the complex interplay between the many levels of the SEF, the equity focused initiative will mediate historic and present conflicts, transform thinking and behaviors of those at the highest risk, change the norms that support violent activity, provide de-escalation training, and provide consistent and accessible support to sustain the positive transformation. Through a multi-level stakeholder (Law Enforcement, Youth, Families, Schools, Community Based Organizations, Government Entities) assessment, it is our hope that addressing and healing generational and environmental trauma will help to provide a safe atmosphere and restore a sense of trust and pride for our communities for many generations to come. This program supports our overall strategy and goal to create a stronger, resilient, more sustainable County.

- **1.12 Mental Health Services**



- While the need for mental health care and substance use treatments rapidly increased throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic, there was a shortage of mental health professionals. This created a new barrier to accessing mental health and substance use disorder services. The Pandemic’s negative impact on access to mental health and substance use services also emphasized pre-pandemic access barriers. Prior to the pandemic, there was limited access and shortage of resources to mental health and substance use services particularly, for those who were not insured. Respondents identified that the pre-pandemic issues worsened with the surge of COVID-19. The County’s efforts to improve access and resources to mental health and substance use services include the following evidence-based grant initiatives:
 - **Restructuring Rockland’s Resources- Behavioral Health Call Center (311)-** Through a collaborative effort with multiple departments throughout the county, led by the Rockland County Department of Mental Health, the **Rockland County Behavioral Health Call Center** will provide a single phone number for Rockland residents to be able to access all aspects of the Rockland County Behavioral Health System of Care (RCBHSOC). The call center will provide a dedicated number for residents who are experiencing a behavioral health (mental health, chemical dependency, developmental disability) issue that need support, treatment, mobile-response, or information. The call center will be staffed by trained individuals 24 hours a day 7 days a week/365 days a year to provide information and support, referral for services and supports, or connection to mobile response, 911 or 988-suicide hotline.
 - **Mobile Response and Stabilization Service (MRSS):** In 2020, the County of Rockland began our own MRSS team (the CARE team) to fill a large gap in our crisis services. Starting during the COVID-19 Pandemic, the team had unique

learning experiences getting the program off the ground and was well received and continues to be utilized. Rockland is currently the first and ONLY county in NYS to have this program and plans to explore options to expand services using SLFRF funds. The proposed learning collaborative will include best-practice presentations featuring examples from the field and lessons learned; intensive small group (maximum of 8 states/sites) facilitated peer-to-peer learning; individual monthly coaching; data collection and analysis; affinity group opportunities; and access to resources and tools to support design and implementation.

- **Community Respite Center:** The County of Rockland has recently been awarded the New York State Regional Crisis Stabilization Center. To target the needs of the team of caregivers, for individuals with Mental Health or Substance Use Challenges, the County is proposing to use SLFRF funding to provide a respite program opportunity. This program would give caregivers resources to experience a positive “break” and a renewed focus on their health to better provide care.

Social Conditions and The Built Environment

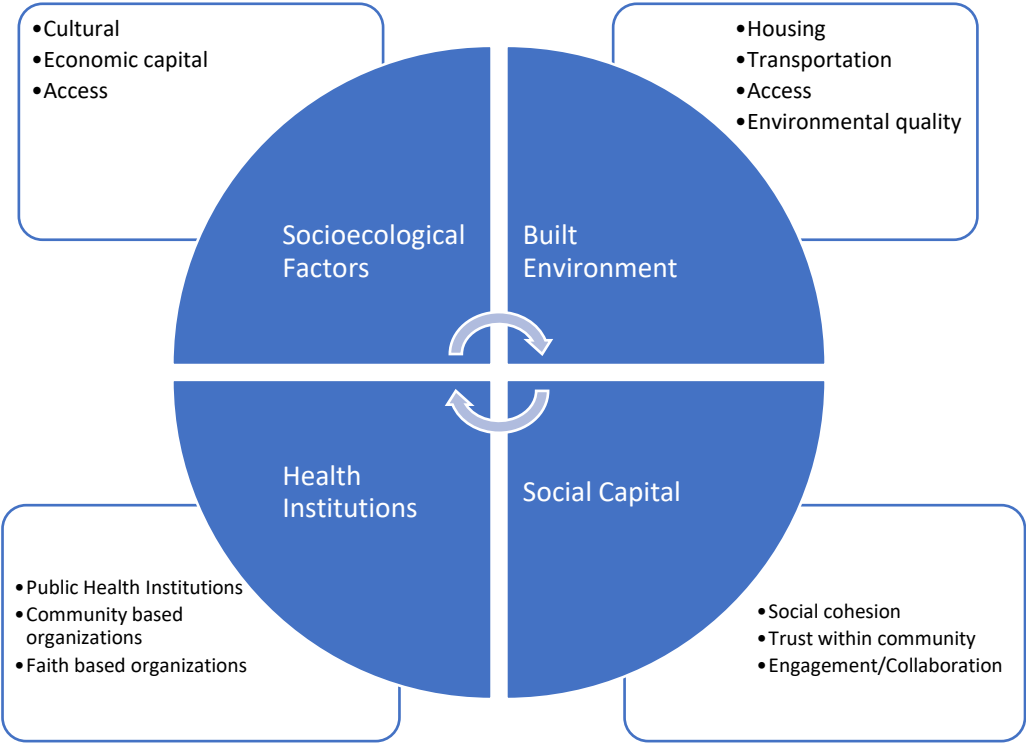
- **Negative Economic Impacts (EC 2):** Through surveys and in-person qualitative assessments, collaboration with intergovernmental departments, Community Based Organizations, Not for Profits, and Small Businesses, the County continues to develop a response to the negative economic impacts through allocation of SLFRF funds. Through various studies (housing needs assessment, shared path feasibility study), and public health frameworks (SWOT, CATWOE), the County will continue to map out the allocation of SLFRF funds with a Whole Person, Whole Community, Whole County mindset.

- **2.15 Long-term Housing Security: Affordable Housing**
 - As we begin to revive and rebuild the County through the built environment, the need for affordable passive housing is evident in both our impacted and disproportionately impacted communities. Our proposed programs under this expenditure:
 - Affordable Passive Housing, creating a more concerted effort on long term, environmentally sustainable options
 - Loan Flexibilities, to aid in the long- term affordable housing investment
 - A Collaborative effort with our Community Development Home ARP funds to potentially acquire or rehabilitate rental housing
 - Predevelopment activity and Site Work

Through the development of new housing opportunities via our proposed SLFRF allocation, the County will evaluate and promote the following:

- Healthier population, healthier outcomes, and healthier economy
 - Improved infrastructure
 - Improved perception of affordable housing
 - Increased opportunities for younger adults, seniors
 - Increased collaboration and participation at a multi sector level
-
- **2.22 Strong Healthy Communities: Neighborhood Features that Promote Health & Safety**
 - Neighborhoods are key determinants to health. When understanding how to improve better health outcomes, especially at a community level, the built environment and its social characteristics can shape opportunities for barriers or promotion to overall health, especially in disproportionately impacted communities. When identifying interventions, they should be community oriented, allowing for buy-in from the residents themselves. Through creation of a more empowered and resilient community, the interventions will be more sustainable via community “ownership.”
 - The proposed ARPA expenditure is a County- wide, all-encompassing project to improve the built environment. Defined by the CDC as all the physical parts of where we love and work (e.g., homes, buildings, streets, open spaces, and infrastructure), the built environment influences an individual and community’s public health. According to the **Final Rule**, *“Treasury recognizes the connection between neighborhood-built environment and physical health outcomes, including risk factors that may have contributed to disproportionate COVID–19*

health impacts in low-income communities. The final rule also recognizes that the public health impacts of the pandemic are broader than just the COVID-19 disease itself and include substantial impacts on mental health and public safety challenges like rates of violent crime, which are correlated with a neighborhood’s built environment and features. As such, neighborhood features that promote improved health and safety outcomes respond to the preexisting disparities that contributed to COVID-19’s disproportionate impacts on low-income communities.” Through a retrospective study, the county evaluated the Community Health Assessment (CHA), Community Health Implementation Plan (CHIP), and identified the increased level of chronic disease (HBP, High Cholesterol, Heart Disease), severe housing problems (26%), physical inactivity (24%), attributed to extreme vulnerability to the pandemic. Through Treasury’s outlined expenditure categories: Negative Economic Impact and Services to Disproportionally Impacted Communities, and through a THRIVE model method (pictured below), the ARPA department is proposing a whole county, whole community approach through the following projects:



- **Rockland County Open Spaces:** To create sustainability, it is critical that the residents of Rockland have supportive buy-in to the revitalization project. By creating open spaces/community gardens/parks/ playgrounds, the communities’-built environments will improve and capacity to move about the County will be more accessible than ever before. More importantly, communities with have more ownership within their neighborhoods, helping in the overall concept and design of the new proposed area. These open spaces will integrate communities, fostering mutual respect of the many diverse cultures that make up the County to

create a larger connection of partnerships and cultural competence, while promoting Rockland's rich history through educational programs. With development of various open space concepts/green infrastructure around the County, the following will occur:

- Multi sector collaboration (e.g., County Departments, Municipalities, Not for Profits)
 - Educational programs year round
 - Historical Tours of Rockland- link the entire county to its roots and to itself
 - Outdoor activity promotion- physical activity, STEM programs
 - New art and themes to each space, more representation
 - Safer walkability and biking ability options throughout the County of Rockland
- **Shared Use Path:** To promote healthy activities, education, and expand accessibility within the County, the project will attach a walking and bicycling path, which is also handicapped accessible, from the southernmost portion of Rockland County (Palisades, NY) to the northern most portion of Rockland County (Stony Point, NY), along or near the Hudson River whenever possible. Throughout this pandemic, Rockland County has seen a significant increase in bike riding, walking, and running from residents as well as community members from surrounding areas in the Hudson Valley. The **Shared Use Path** would be intended to integrate communities from all over Rockland, invite visitors to learn of the cultural and historical stories of our County, provide additional modes of transportation, highlight environmental sustainability, and assist in improving our economic development and supporting our small businesses. While creating a shared use path, it is important to evaluate the existing infrastructure and identify areas of low activity to determine potential Social Determinants of Health that inhibit opportunities to physical activity in certain areas. Developing the path will begin with a feasibility study to identify the socioeconomic demographics of the existing and proposed paths, while stressing a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) study to ensure safety and a more sustainable built environment.
- **2.29 Loans or Grants to Mitigate Financial Hardship (Small Business Rescue Reimbursement Grant Program)**
 - The ARPA Department is currently developing the *Rockland Small Business Rescue Grant Program* to combat the negative economic and employment impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Individual grants, to reimburse past expenses or fund future expenses, will be awarded to select applicants who meet the eligibility requirements. All Applicants will be required to describe how the COVID-19 Pandemic negatively affected their business and how the eligible items helped alleviate the financial hardships experienced during the pandemic. They must include information about how this funding could help them offset revenue loss, maintain their staff employment, and (if applicable) a list of increased costs.
 - Eligible businesses are Rockland County based privately owned micro-businesses, small businesses, enterprises, or sole proprietorships, that offer fee-

based goods or services and have fewer than 500 employees and annual revenues up to \$1 million. Businesses include but are not limited to Indoor Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, Pet Grooming, Boarding, and Walking, Restaurants, Eateries, Food Stands and Food Trucks, Bars, Bakeries, Cafes, Breweries/Wineries Catering, Delis, etc., Bookstore/Stationary, Housekeeping, Fitness Centers, Florists, General Retail, Salons/Spas, Bicycle shops, Other Consumer Service Firms (i.e., Architectural, Design, Marketing). Eligible business expenses include but are not limited to Commercial/Retail Rent (up to 6 months), Safety Investments (Including PPE and Cleaning Supplies), Software Fees, Marketing Fees (advertising and promotion), Credit Card Processing Fees, Supplies (operational items).

- **2.34 Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations (Impacted or Disproportionately Impacted)**

- Nonprofits play a fundamental role in creating more equitable and thriving communities. Throughout the lifecycle of the ARPA expenditures, not for profit participation will be integrated through grant opportunities. In addition to adding funding opportunities throughout the proposed expenditure categories listed, a few individual grant opportunities will be developed:
- **Food Security Grant Program:** This grant was established to reimburse Rockland Based organizations that distributed food to communities in the County of Rockland that have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Individual grants to reimburse past expenses will be awarded to select applicants who meet the eligibility requirements below. All Applicants must describe how the COVID-19 Pandemic negatively affected the organization and how the eligible items helped resolve the problem. They must include information about the statistics of the percent increase of the need for food, how the need fell in communities with socioeconomic disadvantages and a quantifiable increase in need.
- Eligible entities are Rockland County Based organizations that are not permanently closed. These entities include but are not limited to Food Pantries, Food Banks, Community-based organizations, Faith-based organizations, Non-profit organizations. Reimbursing qualified expenses incurred from March 3, 2021, to the date of contract, that were used to assist communities and individuals in the County of Rockland experiencing food insecurities due to COVID-19. Eligible expenses include, but are not limited to barriers/partitions, cleaning supplies, food distribution space/pantry rental, vehicle rental.
- **Nonprofit Rescue Reimbursement Grant Program:** Developed to combat the negative economic and staffing impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Individual grants, to reimburse past expenses or fund future expenses will be awarded to select applicants who meet the eligibility requirements. All Applicants will be required to describe how the COVID-19 Pandemic negatively affected their organization and how the eligible items helped alleviate the financial hardships experienced during the pandemic. They must include information

about how this funding could help them offset revenue loss, maintain their staff, and (if applicable) a list of increased costs.

- Eligible Not-Profits must be Rockland based. Eligible expenses include but are not limited to Rent (up to 6 months), Safety Investments (Including PPE and Cleaning Supplies), Software Fees, Increased Costs for Supplies (operational items).

Social Conditions and Public Health Response

- **Public Health-Negative Economic Impact: Public Sector Capacity (EC 3)**
- **3.3 Public Sector Workforce: Other (Frontline Worker Fund)**
 - Frontline workers have been integral in responding to COVID-19. As our County was faced with the many hardships that came with the pandemic, at one point having the highest mortality rate per capita in the entire Country, it was our frontline workers that were expected to support us at the same risking their lives. A Frontline Worker Fund would be allocated to frontline workers (EMS, EMT, Firefighters) who could not work remotely, and who faced “heightened risks” due to the nature of their work.
- **3.5 Public Sector Capacity: Administrative Needs (Regional eSourcing Procurement Software)**
 - The Regional eSourcing, Contract Management and eMarketplace Procurement software (“Regional eSourcing Procurement software”) will benefit the County of Rockland’s ARPA Department as well as many additional departments in the mission to Revive and Rebuild Rockland. Expanding the eSourcing Procurement software from solely County-wide to Regional creates a Regional online marketplace for all local governments and non-profits to access contracts awarded by five counties. A central repository for such information will save participants time, enforce accountability, and provide a unified structure for the procurement process. These highlights will attribute to fair, innovative, and cost-efficient procurement solutions.
 - Many of ARPA’s future proposed projects will require proper procurement measures in accordance with Uniform Guidance. The Regional eSourcing Procurement software would not only assist the ARPA Department in ensuring compliance with Uniform Guidance, it will also help the ARPA Department to view the bids of other Counties, States and National Cooperative Contracts to create evidence-based investments with reputable contractors. This software also allows for the ARPA Department to view the bids of Local Governments and Nonprofit Organizations to eliminate the potential risk of duplication of funds.
 - In addition to the benefits for the ARPA Department, there are benefits for participating Counties, Local Governments and Nonprofit Organizations.
 - For Counties, this software will also Increase spend analysis among the five counties to leverage purchasing volume, increase cooperative solicitations/contracts issued by the five counties, provide Contract Management, and provide a “Shared Service” model where local governments and Nonprofit Organizations can participate in County bids to aggregate volume and purchase through the marketplace. The marketplace would contain contracts that can be piggybacked, from the five counties, would be available free of charge to all local governments and non-profit organizations within the five counties The Regional eSourcing Procurement software will also aid all vendors in developing their regional online marketplace presence.

- While this software offers excellent opportunities for participating Counties, Local Governments, and Nonprofit Organizations, it also will help to lower barriers to the competitive bidding process for small, minority owned, women-owned, and service disable veteran businesses. This platform will help to create a more extensive and equity-focused bid process for local businesses who were all negatively affected by the COVID pandemic. The software will also assist these same businesses in developing their online sales capability through the marketplace.
- **Premium Pay (EC 4):** At this juncture, The County of Rockland has decided to not use SLFRF funding towards Premium Pay.
- **Water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure (EC 5):** At this juncture, The County of Rockland has not decided if SLFRF funding will be used towards Water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure.
- **Revenue Replacement (EC 6):** The County of Rockland has decided to not use SLFRF funding towards Revenue Replacement.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

The entire County of Rockland was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, at one point having the highest mortality rate per capita in the Country. It has always been, and will continue to be, the County's goal to utilize our SLFRF funds to reach all our residents and communities that reside in Rockland to create a better, more sustainable County of Rockland.

Throughout the engagement process, the County continues to conduct a fair and just process of data collection and assessment of need. Our continued outreach to community members through multiple avenues that include in person contact and telecommunication, as well as other digital capabilities to ensure a larger, often underrepresented resident base will allow an equal opportunity to convey their concerns and ideas on the use of the SLFRF funds. With full transparency throughout the entire process, the County is approaching all funding allocation categories with a logic model and Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-based (SMART) goals to assess equitable outreach and services to communities and continues to be open and upfront with the public and other intergovernmental departments. Furthermore, a lean strategy to any evidence-based interventions using a Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA), SWOT, and CATWOE framework to ensure the County is measuring outcomes and identifying possible unintended consequences throughout the process to avoid a loss of opportunity, inequitable practices, and allow for scalable improvements. In doing so, the County achieves the following:

- The County of Rockland's ARPA Department ensures that all flyers/advertising is translated into the various languages that represent the very diverse communities that reside in the County
- A user-friendly grant portal, that can be translated in multiple languages, to assist in a more streamlined application process and more effective monitoring and compliance
- Free Uniform Guidance training from our Procurement department to ensure compliance with all Federal Regulations
- Continuous IT training and technical support held via in person, virtual meetings, or telephone
- More interdepartmental Collaboration- ensuring current trends are evaluated, data is relevant, and needs are met across the board
- Multiple iterations of a full ARPA Comprehensive Plan, determine the acute needs of the community/County
- Multiple in person site visits/ meetings with other local government entities, local businesses and organizations, and various individuals and families that represent the whole of the County

With the use of multiple types of outreach opportunities, on foot advertising, email blasts, digital correspondence, culturally aware in translating – flyers, website, portal; our goal for continued community voice and buy-in is ever present. Multiple meetings with other government agencies, not for profits and faith-based organizations, attending collaboratives, walking through communities, hosting in person community focus groups, we have seen an increase in interest in our existing grants and future expenditure plans. We will continue this outreach and expand our efforts to more groups and individuals as we continue to move forward with other proposed expenditures.

Identifying obstacles of completing applications or difficulty acquiring certain required documentation, the County has been focused on making sure enough capacity training is available to our applicants for a more streamlined process. With more outreach and support offered, more applications have been started and a new opportunity for dialogue between applicant and County has developed. Through an analysis of the application process, the County found both impacted and disproportionately impacted applicants had difficulty with the application process. Once dialogue and training were established, applicants found the portal easier to apply, the County created check lists to offer a starting point and more guidance, provided multiple channels of communication, and hosted meetings and focus groups.

With a concentration of equity and a more accessible and easier to use guide to apply, the current SLFRF allocations have been distributed throughout the various towns, villages, and municipalities. With the recent allocation of funds to beneficiaries and subrecipients, the word of mouth from community members has increased and more small businesses and not for profits have reached out to apply. With a renewed focus on open dialogue and fostering a mutual working relationship with our county community, we have built more trust and increased our opportunities to serve all in the County.

Community Engagement

As discussed in promoting equitable outcomes, The ARPA Department continues to remain mindful to the community's emerging needs while also fostering the County's collaborative efforts with CBO's and faith-based organizations. All fliers, Public Service Announcements (PSA's), surveys, and outreach efforts have been translated to the multiple languages that reflect the diversity within the County. Use of funds surveys, use of data, raw data from Department of Social Service, Department of Health, Department of Mental Health, Community Health Implementation Plan, Community Health Assessment, ALICE Reports, developed an ARPA Task force as well as subsection Taskforces depending on the Expenditure Category are several methods used to ensure community engagement and remain current to the concerns of the communities we serve. Community collaborative meetings are held monthly, with ARPA giving updates on opportunities and gaining feedback on limitations and concerns. In addition, ARPA has performed additional in-person outreach to gain community buy-in and establish trust.

Recognizing the geographic, cultural, structural, and language limitations of its various community members, the County intends to continue direct outreach specifically related to SLFRF to communities that have been historically underserved. A Comprehensive Plan on potential projects that are eligible for the use of SLFRF funds was created and distributed to the Legislature, all branches of Government, intergovernmental departments, and Nonprofit organizations to gain feedback.

Labor Practices

At this time, the County has not procured any Infrastructure projects, but will ensure compliance with all requirements applicable to any potential future project.

Use of Evidence

As the County continues to gather data from community engagement and multi departmental collaboration, all allocation categories and current and proposed use of funds are based on both qualitative and quantitative data analysis. These sources of data have been developed and assessed via a Learning Agenda, logic model, and the use of SMART goals, allowing the County to identify gaps, organize proper methods of evidence and evaluation, build capacity, and develop trainings, foster collaboration, and evidence-based sharing, and reinforce organizational change. The County has reviewed both internal and possible external sources in our approach for using evidence and evaluation that will support the overarching efforts to create an evidence-based strategy for more sustainable interventions.

For every current and future expenditure, The County of Rockland has decided to consider for SLFRF funds, multiple evidence-based practices and research has been conducted prior to establishing a project in the Comprehensive Plan. Once all data and statistics are obtained, the ARPA Department Logic Models, SWOT, CATWOE, and balancing and reinforcing feedback loops are completed to ensure there are no unintended consequence and any risk of duplication of funds.

The following links have been used for each current project:

1.8 COVID-19 Assistance to Small Businesses (Reviving Rockland Restaurant Grant)

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2.29 Loans or Grants to Mitigate Financial Hardship (Small Business Rescue Reimbursement Grant Program)

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2.22 Strong Healthy Communities: Neighborhood Features that Promote Health & Safety (Rockland Resilience Restoration Grant)

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2.34 Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations (Impacted or Disproportionately Impacted) (Food Security Grant Program)

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Performance Report

Through Quarterly Reporting, Annual Reporting, and monitoring of the open grants in our Grant Management Portal, the ARPA Department closely monitors the use and success of the open grant opportunities.

At this time, we have not fully closed out a grant opportunity to fully determine its performance but can advise that the current opportunities have been well received.

Project Inventory

Project PH – 001 - Personal Protective Equipment

Funding amount: \$20,378.89

Project Expenditure Category: 1-Public Health – 1.5 Personal Protective Equipment

Project Overview

The County of Rockland used SLFRF funding to purchase and distribute Personal Protective Equipment to various individuals and community organizations between March 3, 2021, and December 31, 2021, throughout all of Rockland County.

Goal

- To provide PPE to communities that were directly impacted by the COVID-19 virus in Rockland varied from seniors, low to moderate income households, multi-generational households, the homeless, and the sick and homebound.

Use of Evidence

- Through our partnerships with our local not for profits, faith-based organizations, food pantries, community centers, and other county departments, we were successful in reaching a higher percentage of community members.
- We set up giveaway events, partnering with our local Department of Health during their vaccination pods, had drive-thru events with our OFA, dropped off PPE packages to senior housing complexes, held events at our local community centers, and delivered PPE to soup kitchens for the homeless population.
- Serves Disproportionately Impacted Low-income Households and populations, Impacted low or moderate income Households and populations, Disproportionally Impacted Nonprofits operating in Qualified Censes Tracts

Performance Report

- As we distributed our PPE, throughout all of 2021, specifically in the QCT, we saw more community engagement/support, as well as reduction in COVID cases. Our proactive approach provided much needed solace to individuals and families who could not afford PPE.

Project 1.8 – RRR: Reviving Rockland Restaurant Grant Program

Funding amount: \$500,000.00

Project Expenditure Category: 1-Public Health – 1.8 COVID-19 Assistance to Small Businesses

Project Overview

Restaurants in particular have experienced and continue to experience an undesirable outlook as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic Many restaurants may have faced periods of

closure reduced capacity and saw declining revenues as customers were unable to dine-in. These closures also had significant negative impacts on restaurant employment and the economy

The County of Rockland has established the Reviving Rockland Restaurants Grant Program to combat the negative economic impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. As restaurants began to reopen in June 2020 they were limited to only 25 capacity indoors further exacerbating the economic stress of recovering from the financial hardships imposed by the pandemic. In an effort to safely recoup the additional customer capacity base and bring them back to safe operations outdoor dining became a staple for our restaurants. The addition of outdoor dining brought back Rockland based employees comforted loyal patrons to return and kept restaurants from closing. Unfortunately in order to operate outdoor dining additional expenses were incurred perpetuating the economic strain to remain open. The Reviving Rockland Restaurant Grant Program will aid our restaurants to offset increased outdoor expenses and maintain sustainable outdoor dining opportunities. Individual grants to reimburse past expenses or fund future expenses ranging from \$5000.00 - \$25,000.00 will be awarded to select applicants who meet the eligibility requirements below and will continue until the total grant amount of \$500,000.00 is expended.

Eligible entities are Rockland based businesses that are not permanently closed have the capacity for outdoor dining and include businesses where the public or patrons assemble for the primary purpose of being served food or drink including but not limited to:

- Restaurants
 - Food stands/food trucks
 - Bars, saloons, lounges, taverns
 - Bakeries
 - Delis
 - Cafes
 - Breweries, Wineries, and/or microbreweries
 - Other similar places of business in which the public or patrons assemble for the primary purpose of being served food or drink
- Link: <https://rocklandgov.com/departments/county-executive/reviving-and-rebuilding-rockland/grants/#RRRGP>

Goal

- To provide reimbursement assistance to restaurants who shifted their operation to include outdoor dining to increase capacity and promote safe return for their customers and employees, while also recovering financial profit loss. Through this program, restaurants would be given a sustainable opportunity to continue outdoor dining as a permanent option as well as buffer the financial burden of the winter months resulting in the closed use of outdoor spaces.

Use of Evidence

- In May 2020, US employment in restaurants was 37% lower than in May 2019, a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. 54% of NY restaurant operators said it was unlikely their restaurant will still be in business six months from now, if there are no additional relief packages from the federal government. This assistance also safely returns Rockland

based, low/mod income employees back to the workforce, ensuring financial stability in their home.

- Serves Impacted Small Businesses that experienced a negative economic impact and Disproportionately Impacted Low-income Households and Populations
- Total project spending that is allocated towards evidence-based interventions: \$500,000.00
- Please see **Use of Evidence Section 1.8 COVID-19 Assistance to Small Businesses (Reviving Rockland Restaurant Grant)** – for additional evidence-based data

Performance Report

- This grant has currently assisted 11 Restaurants.
- The aggregate of the grant awards is \$216,968.62.

Project 2.22 – RRRS: Rockland Resilient Recreation Grant Program

Funding amount: \$5,000,000.00

Project Expenditure Category: 2 – Negative Economic Impact – 2.22 Strong Health Communities: Neighborhood Features that Promote Health and Safety

Project Overview

The negative public health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have fallen most severely on economically disadvantaged communities, exacerbating pre-existing disparities in health outcomes. The built environment, and risk factors associated with them, play a key role in determining public health outcomes. As defined by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the built environment includes all the physical parts of where people live and work (e.g., neighborhoods, streets, open spaces, buildings, etc.). Research has shown that disparate health outcomes could be attributed to increased risk factors of the built environment (population density, spatial patterns, etc.), placing economically disadvantaged communities at an increased risk during the pandemic. Aside from the COVID-19 disease itself, the public health impacts of the pandemic include substantial impacts on mental health and public safety challenges, which are also correlated with the built environment.

The SLFRF program has recognized the connection between the built environment and public health outcomes and has acknowledged the need for investments in the built environment of economically disadvantaged communities. The final rule includes enumerated eligible uses in disproportionately impacted communities for developing neighborhood features, such as urban green spaces, that promote improved health and safety outcomes. These investments in urban green spaces, including parks, green spaces, and recreational facilities, will directly respond to the disproportionate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic by improving built environments and promoting equitable public health outcomes.

The County of Rockland has established the Rockland Resilient Recreation Grant Program, with ARPA funds, to reduce health inequities in the county by developing and enhancing public urban green spaces in communities that were disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Rockland Resilient Recreation Grant Program will foster

coordination between municipalities and nonprofit organizations and maximize the potential of these equity-focused investments in public urban green spaces.

Up to approximately \$5 million will be made available through the Rockland Resilient Recreation Grant Program, which will foster these equity-focused investments in impacted communities. Individual reimbursement grants, ranging from \$5,000 up to \$200,000, will be awarded to local governments to carry out projects that develop or enhance quality public urban green spaces that will be available to all Rockland County residents. The success of these equity-focused investments has the potential to reduce social inequities, expand economic opportunities, build resilient communities, and improve health quality throughout the county.

- Link: <https://rocklandgov.com/departments/county-executive/reviving-and-rebuilding-rockland/grants/#rrrp>

Goal

- Collaboration with municipalities and nonprofits is critical for this program’s goal of developing or enhancing accessible public urban green spaces. This reimbursement grant will provide funding to municipalities and nonprofits to partner on projects of equity-focused investments in public urban green spaces to improve the built environment and foster equitable health outcomes for all residents of the county.

Use of Evidence

- Through retrospective meta-analysis, quantitative and qualitative assessment, and ongoing community outreach, the ARPA department identified the need for accessible, well-maintained, and safe open spaces. The addition of new and upgrades to existing open spaces expands the opportunity for outdoor recreation while promoting health and safety in our neighborhoods.
- Serves Disproportionally Impacted Low Income Households and populations, Impacted Low- or moderate-income Households and populations, and Impacted General Public
- Total project spending that is allocated towards evidence-based interventions: \$5,000,000.00
- Please see **Use of Evidence Section 2.22 Strong Healthy Communities: Neighborhood Features that Promote Health & Safety (Rockland Resilience Restoration Grant)**– for additional evidence-based data

Performance Report

- This grant has not awarded any funds at this time but has 29 open applications.

Project 2.29 – SB: Small Business Rescue Reimbursement Grant Program

Funding amount: \$2,000,000.00

Project Expenditure Category: 2 – Negative Economic Impact – 2.29 Loans or Grants to Mitigate Financial Hardship (Small Business Rescue Reimbursement Grant Program)

Project Overview

Small businesses are the backbone of the U.S. economy, 99% of all businesses in the U.S. are small businesses. A 2019 report found there were 2.2 million small businesses in New York State, employing 4.1 million employees – 50.2% of the New York State workforce.

Small businesses help stimulate the local economy and play a crucial role in supporting the U.S. economic recovery. The COVID-19 pandemic has severely impacted many small businesses nationwide. Small businesses have experienced and continue to experience an undesirable outlook as the result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since March 2020, many small businesses have suffered from periods of closure and revenue loss. A March 2021 report by the New York State Comptroller found that 4 out of 5 small businesses in New York continue to report negative economic impacts caused by the pandemic. Additionally, an October 2021 report from the Comptroller found that only 1 in 5 small businesses have reported a return to “normal operations.”

The County of Rockland has established the \$2 million Small Businesses Rescue Reimbursement Grant Program, with ARPA funds, to accelerate economic recovery by providing Rockland County small businesses with reimbursement funds for eligible expenses incurred during, and related to, the COVID-19 pandemic. Individual reimbursement grants, ranging from \$5,000.00 - \$50,000.00 will be awarded to select applicants who meet the eligibility requirements and will be awarded until the total funding amount is expended.

- Link: <https://rocklandgov.com/departments/county-executive/reviving-and-rebuilding-rockland/grants/#sbrr>

Goal

- The Rockland Small Businesses Rescue Reimbursement Grant Program aims to provide funding for Rockland County small businesses and micro-enterprises, who can demonstrate revenue declines or unexpected operating cost deficits after March 3, 2021, up to the contracted date, to offset increased expenses or revenue loss caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Use of Evidence

- As of Q3 2021, Rockland County Small Business employment numbers have still not yet reached pre-pandemic levels. With the rising costs for real estate and operational materials, it is our hope that the grants to Small Businesses will mitigate financial hardship, restore normal operations, and safely return Rockland based, low/mod income employees back to the workforce, ensuring financial stability in their home.
- Serves Impacted Small Businesses that experienced a negative impact, and Disproportionally Impacted Small Businesses operating in Qualified Census Tracts
- Total project spending that is allocated towards evidence-based interventions: \$2,000,000.00
- Please see **Use of Evidence Section 2.29 Loans or Grants to Mitigate Financial Hardship (Small Business Rescue Reimbursement Grant Program)**– for additional evidence-based data

Performance Report

- This grant has not awarded any funds at this time but has 18 open applications.

Project 2.34 – FS: Food Security Grant Program

Funding amount: \$500,000.00

Project Expenditure Category: 2 – Negative Economic Impact – 2.34 Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations (Impacted or Disproportionately Impacted)

Project Overview

According to a new nationally representative survey of more than 2,000 U.S. adults by Consumer Reports, about 1 in 5 American grocery shoppers (19 percent) have used a food pantry, food bank, or community food distribution at some point since the pandemic began. What is more, about half of them said they didn't use these food programs in the year leading up to the COVID-19 outbreak in the U.S. Therefore, with the prevalence of the COVID-19 outbreak, many community organizations have been using their own funds in meeting the food demands in marginalized communities.

The County of Rockland has established the Food Security Grant Program to reimburse Rockland Based organizations that distributed food to communities in the County of Rockland that have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Individual grants to reimburse past expenses ranging from \$5,000.00 - \$25,000.00, will be awarded to select applicants who meet the eligibility requirements below and will continue until the total grant amount of \$500,000.00 is expended.

Eligible entities are Rockland County Based organizations that are not permanently closed, assist in distributing food to communities and individuals in the County of Rockland who experience food insecurities:

- Food Pantries
 - Food Banks
 - Community-based organizations
 - Faith-based organizations
 - Non-profit organizations
- Link: <https://rocklandgov.com/departments/county-executive/reviving-and-rebuilding-rockland/grants/#fsgp>

Goal

- To provide reimbursement assistance to Rockland-based Food Pantries, Food Banks, Community-based/Faith-based/Non-profit organizations for qualified expenses incurred to assist with an increased need for food distribution due to the pandemic and promote a safe return for their clients. Through this program, these organizations would be given a sustainable opportunity to continue to assist communities and individuals in Rockland experiencing food insecurities while maintaining an emphasis on safety.

Use of Evidence

- Through meta-analysis, quantitative and qualitative assessment, and ongoing community outreach, the ARPA department identified the exponential increase of individuals who suffered from food insecurity due to the COVID-19 pandemic i.e., being laid off, being quarantined, hospitalization, etc. Adding to the already exacerbated need for food, Nonprofits reevaluated their operational structure and increased their scope of work to accommodate the increased food need of their local communities.
- Serves Disproportionately Impacted Low-income Households and Populations, Impacted Nonprofits that experienced a negative impact, and Disproportionally Impacted Nonprofits operating in Qualified Census Tracts
- Total project spending that is allocated towards evidence-based interventions: \$500,000.00
- Please see **Use of Evidence Section 2.34 Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations (Impacted or Disproportionately Impacted) (Food Security Grant Program)** – for additional evidence-based data

Performance Report

- This grant has currently assisted 1 Nonprofit.
- The aggregate of the grant awards is \$21,450.00.