City of St. Petersburg, Florida

Recovery Plan

State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

2025 Report

City of St. Petersburg, Florida

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Executive Summary

In 2021, the City of St. Petersburg engaged with community for input regarding developing our spending plan for the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. The City held three in-person workshops, in different geographic locations, to receive community input on how the funds should be used. We also included a virtual participation option for those citizens who were unable to attend an in-person workshop. A link to the City's website with information on this public input process is below:

American Rescue Plan Act (stpete.org)

At the workshops and virtual participation options, the City outlined the following areas of impact eligible for the funds, based on the federal guidelines included in the ARPA:

1. Infrastructure (water, stormwater, sewer, and broadband),
2. Housing affordability and support,
3. Health and social equity,
4. Economic recovery/resilience, and
5. Public health/safety.

The participants ranked the areas for funding prioritization and the results from the public input were presented to City Council on August 19, 2021. Based on the ranking results, the City Administration suggested the following allocation plan of resources to City Council:

Area of Impact	Community Driven Grant Proposals	City Driven Investments	Totals
Housing Affordability/Support	$1,000,000	$14,137,957	$15,137,957
Health & Social Equity	$1,000,000	$11,110,365	$12,110,365
Infrastructure	$1,000,000	$8,082,774	$9,082,774
Economic Recovery/Resilience	$1,000,000	$5,055,183	$6,055,183
Public Health/Safety	$1,000,000	$2,027,591	$3,027,591
Grand Total	**$5,000,000**	**$40,413,870**	**$45,413,870**

During discussion at the August 19, 2021 City Council meeting, there was general agreement with the above allocation plan.

From there, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact City residents. The City began, and continues, to face a historic increase in rent and housing costs which has amplified the already existing strain on affordable housing. Increasingly, City residents are experiencing housing insecurity and the related health and social impacts. Emergency Rental Assistance dollars were fully expended. The toll of the pandemic began to snowball into more sustained effects such as an increase in violence, mental health challenges, and workforce issues.

In January 2022, Mayor Welch was inaugurated and established his Pillars and Principles for the City. In February 2022, with the pandemic impacts becoming more apparent, City Council requested City Administration to revisit the ARPA allocation plan to more substantially address the affordable housing crisis and the health and social equity impacts. The City adjusted the allocation plan and presented the following proposal to City Council in March 2022:

Areas of Impact	Previous Allocation	New Allocation
Revenue Loss Standard Allowance	$0	$10,000,000*
Housing Affordability/Support	$15,137,957	$24,303,505
Health & Social Equity	$12,110,365	$11,110,365
Infrastructure	$9,082,774	$0
Economic Recovery/Resilience	$6,055,183	$0
Public Health & Safety	$3,027,591	$0
Grand Total	**$45,413,870**	**$45,413,870**

*On March 3, 2022, City Council approved Resolution 2022-107 which transferred $10M to the General Fund as part of the standard allowance for revenue loss allowed under the Final Rule. The transfer reimbursed the City for government service expenditures during Fiscal Year 2021. This transfer also freed up $10M in the General Fund to be used for two Housing Affordability/Support projects: Deuces Housing and Community Development Project ($6.5M) and the Affordable Housing Gap Financing Project with a focus on producing new rental units that would be affordable for households with incomes at or below 80% AMI ($3.5M).

City Council was in general agreement with the above allocation plan.

City Administration began to identify specific projects and strategic initiatives to fund in the above two areas of impact and presented the spending plan to City Council in May 2022. There was general agreement by City Council on the spending plan.

City Administration has since initiated all projects under the new spending plan, and City Council appropriated and obligated all $45,413,870 in ARPA funds prior to the December 31, 2024 obligation deadline. See details in the sections below on the status of each project and impact to date.

Uses of Funds

The City identified specific projects for use of the ARPA funds in the Housing Affordability and Support and the Health and Social Equity areas of impact as follows:

Revenue Loss

The City elected to take the standard allowance of $10M that a local government can claim as "lost revenue" under the Final Rule. The $10M was transferred to the City's General Fund to reimburse the City for government services expenditures that occurred during FY21, specifically under the award eligibility period of March 3, 2021 to September 30, 2021. This transfer of funding then freed up $10M in the General Fund to be used for additional affordable housing projects. $6.5M went to the Deuces Housing and Community Development Project and $3.5M to the Affordable Housing Gap Financing Project with a focus on producing new rental units that would be affordable for households with incomes at or below 80% AMI.

Housing Affordability and Support Initiatives

Affordable Multi-Family Development

The City has allocated $20.3M of the ARPA funds to provide gap financing for the construction of multi-family affordable housing.

The pandemic underscored the importance of having a safe place to shelter and to raise families. The selected multi-family projects will address demand for and increase the supply of affordable housing units for low- and moderate-income households in St Petersburg. In addition to providing families with greater stability, affordable housing provides households with more money to spend on necessities such as health care and adequate food.

The selected projects are those that will produce affordable housing units for households who are presumed to have been negatively impacted by COVID by Treasury's standards, including low- and moderate- income households, households that experienced unemployment, households that experienced food or housing insecurity, etc. The funding will come with affordability period requirements for each development. The ARPA funding allocated to this project will provide gap financing to multi-family affordable housing projects that include units at or below 65% of the Area Median Income. All 7 projects are also receiving funds from other sources in addition to ARPA, but 100% of all 515 units under construction are at 80% AMI or below to meet the needs of the community and provide affordable options at a variety of AMI levels (see chart below).

The Request for Proposal/Notice of Funding Availability was issued on June 1, 2022, with responses due on June 30, 2022. There were seven multi-family responses received through the RFP. The project review team met on August 9, 2022 to evaluate the responses received. City Council approved appropriations for the selected investments on October 20, 2022. The City also plans to utilize General Fund dollars, Penny for Pinellas funding, and HCIP funding in order to provide support to all 7 projects that applied to this RFP.

On June 6, 2024, City Council approved a reallocation of funds among the multi-family affordable housing projects due to concerns about one of the original projects not meeting the required ARPA deadlines. The Ed White project was significantly delayed from its original timeline, and the allocated ARPA funds were not likely to be obligated or expended on time. Despite no longer being able to use ARPA funds to support the Ed White project, the City is still financially supporting this project through other funding sources.

City Administration then identified two shovel-ready affordable housing developments that better aligned with the required timelines. These changes to the ARPA allocation for affordable multi-family developments are reflected below.

Below is a list of each development, the allocation of ARPA funds for the project, and the total number of affordable housing units being created:

- Bear Creek Commons – $500,000 – 85 units
- Burlington Post II – $2,939,125 – 75 units
- Skyway Lofts II – $6,500,000 – 66 units
- Innovare – $3,426,166 – 50 units
- Vincentian Village – $1,000,000 – 73 units
- Flats on 4th – $4,394,157 – 80 units
- Palm Lake Urban Sanctuary - $1,544,057 – 86 units
- ~~Ed White – $5,938,314 – 70 units~~ (funds from this project were reallocated on June 6, 2024)

See the chart below for the breakdown of affordable units by each project:

Project	At 30% AMI or Below	At 50% AMI or Below	At 60% AMI or Below	At 80% AMI or Below	Total Units
Bear Creek Commons	18	0	42	25	**85**
Burlington Post II	12	0	39	24	**75**
Skyway Lofts II	11	0	39	16	**66**
Innovare	4	8	38	0	**50**
Vincentian Village	4	11	58	0	**73**
Flats on 4th	0	8	72	0	**80**
Palm Lake Urban Sanctuary	13	14	42	17	**86**
TOTALS	**62**	**41**	**330**	**82**	**515**

As of June 2025, two developments have completed construction and are now fully occupied by residents (Innovare and Bear Creek Commons). An additional four developments have begun construction: Skyway Lofts II (89% complete), Vincentian Village (31% complete), Burlington Post II (32% complete), and Flats on 4th (1% complete). The remaining project has completed closing, obligated the funds, and will commence construction shortly.

Scattered Site Family Shelter

The City entered into an agreement with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul South Pinellas to use $2.5M of ARPA funds to provide scattered site family shelter to meet the need for literally homeless families with minor children experiencing a housing emergency. The Request for Proposals to identify and select the subrecipient was released in December 2021 and awarded on April 13, 2022. The agreement performance period ended in December 31, 2024 with all funds fully expended.

Due to the pandemic and rising housing costs, additional family shelter continues to be a tremendous need in our community. The desired impact of this project was to allow for safe shelter for at least 112 families during the contract period. This is measured by the number of families being sheltered. As outlined in the project inventory section below, St. Vincent de Paul surpassed that goal significantly. They served a total of 160 families through the course of the program.

The intended and actual use of these funds will achieve the goals of utilizing the Housing First approach and providing safe, low-barrier, temporary shelter to literally homeless families with minor children.

This project helps support recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic by assisting those families, within the City of St. Petersburg City limits, that were disproportionately impacted with needs for immediate emergency shelter and further, obtaining permanent housing. This is specific to families with minor children (up to 18 years of age). To qualify, families need to have either previously lived within the Qualified Census Tracts (QCT) of St. Petersburg and/or meet the income limits outlined in the Department of Treasury's final rule, 65% of AMI. The subrecipient originally had five staff members assigned to this project: one Manager to oversee the project, a supervisor to direct staff and staff complex cases, two Family Coordinators to provide housing focused intensive case management, and one Housing Specialist to assist families with locating permanent housing. The project utilizes master leases and hotels, serving twenty-eight families in shelter at any given time. These funds support our communities by keeping families together and ultimately, providing resources that lead to permanent housing.

The project contract period ended in December 2024, with St. Vincent de Paul having fully expended the allocated funding in November 2024.

Permanent Supportive Housing Wraparound Services

The City allocated $1M of ARPA funds to provide case management and wraparound services for residents living in permanent supportive housing through December 2024. The Request for Proposals to identify and select the subrecipient was released in March 2022 and awarded on May 19, 2022 to Boley Centers, Inc. Boley Centers provides community-based services, treatment, and support to disabled persons, exclusively to low- income persons. The subrecipient team for this project was comprised of one Program Director, one ARNP, three Intensive Case Managers, one LPN, and one Peer Specialist. This project provides a funding source that is not typically available but is greatly needed to ensure residents living in permanent support housing can maintain their housing stability and receive all the services they need to achieve that outcome.

The project is specific to participants who reside in households which qualify as low- and moderate-income (at or below 65% AMI) as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the county and size of household and are residents of St. Petersburg. The subrecipient, Boley Centers, provides case management and wraparound services for residents living in permanent supportive housing, who experience chronic homelessness, substance abuse disorders, and severe and persistent mental illness. This program is intended to improve health outcomes for participants, reduce risk to their health and safety, and assist participants with obtaining and retaining permanent housing in accordance with HUD's definition of Housing First through the following strategies:

a. Link individuals to resources in the community and provide a warm hand-off to services through the Continuum of Care (COC) or community providers (medical, dental, legal).
b. Provide or arrange for transportation to services and appointments.
c. Assist in increasing income (referrals to employment, workforce development, linkage to obtaining Social Security Disability Income, etc.)
d. Support individuals in their interactions with other service providers.
e. Complete subsidy applications and recertifications.
f. Other assistance to tenants in requesting and obtaining a reasonable accommodation.
g. Landlord mediation that may include advocating with property management and other service providers.

Case management is a significant component of permanent supportive housing and is participant-driven. Case managers actively engage participants in voluntary case management and service participation by creating an environment in which participants drive the case planning and goal setting based on what they want from the program. Services include flexibility in intensity, a strengths-based approach to empower participants, use of trauma- informed approaches, and application of the Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT).

As of June 2025, this program served a total of 125 individual Heads of Household (a total of 146 individuals, including spouses and children in the household who also received services). Through the life of the program, the Boley team's support enabled program participants to maintain a 90% housing retention rate overall. The program has expended all allotted funds as of May 2025 and the contract period has ended. Boley sought funding to continue providing robust wraparound support to their clients who need intensive support to remain stably housed, however they did not receive funding to maintain the full team of staff providing that support. Boley intends to keep on the LPN and Peer Specialist to support their highest need clients in maintaining housing stability and supporting their mental and physical wellbeing.

Housing Administrative Expenses

The City originally allocated $500,000 of the ARPA funds to cover the City's administrative costs for the various ARPA-funded housing programs during the life of the ARPA program. Prior to the December 31, 2024 obligation deadline, the City reallocated $160,000 from this project to contribute funds to emergency relief from natural disasters as outlined in the 2023 Interim Final Rule. Updates related to that new ARPA project are included in that specific section below.

The City will use the funding to cover allocations of salaries and benefits for housing staff who perform duties related to the ARPA housing programs. The funding may also be used for other administrative expenses that may be deemed necessary and appropriate to efficiently and effectively manage the ARPA housing programs. The Housing and Community Development Department will follow the rules and regulations in 2 CFR Part 200 related to administrative costs.

An appropriation for this use of funds was approved by City Council on March 23, 2022.

This funding is being used for administrative costs to manage all goals and objectives included in the above Housing Affordability & Support strategies. All administrative costs were obligated and reported to the Treasury as required – see Project 19544-1: Administrative Costs Post 12/31/2024 in the Project Inventory below for details.

Housing Disaster Assistance Program

The Housing Disaster Assistance Program is funded by $160,000 that was reallocated from the Housing Administrative Expenses project listed above. As the City explored options for where to reallocate those funds ahead of the obligation deadline, Hurricanes Helene and Milton hit the state of Florida and left devastating impacts across St. Pete. In the 2023 Interim Final Rule, the U.S. Treasury expanded allowable uses for ARPA SLFRF funds to include disaster-relief related activities. As such, the City determined that the $160,000 from the Housing Administrative Expenses project would instead contribute to the City's Housing Disaster Assistance Program. Adding more funds to the Housing Disaster Assistance Program pool, which is also funded by other sources including SHIP dollars, would allow the City to directly serve more residents who need this essential financial assistance in the aftermath of the hurricanes.

The City determined that the following conditions are present, and therefore this program falls under an eligible use category for ARPA SLFRF funding:

1. Treasury-required condition 1: "Identify a natural disaster that has occurred or is expected to occur imminently, or a natural disaster that is threatened to occur in the future."
    a. Hurricane Helene (DR-4828-FL) and Hurricane Milton (DR-4834-FL) are two natural disasters that occurred in the fall of 2024 – both of which received the required emergency declarations.
2. Treasury-required condition 2: "Identify emergency relief that responds to the physical or negative economic impacts, or potential physical or negative economic impacts, of the natural disaster. The emergency relief must be related and reasonably proportional to the impact identified."
    a. Emergency relief is needed for City residents as a result of both of the above-named disasters, both from a physical damage standpoint, due to negative economic impacts of lost homes, lost belongings, lost businesses and employment, displacement, etc.

While the Disaster Assistance Program as a whole provides support for a variety of needs, ARPA funds will only be used to fund activities allowable per the 2023 Interim Final Rule. This includes rental assistance when residents were displaced and need help paying for temporary housing, debris removal (such as trees), and home repairs not covered by insurance for primary residences in order to make the residence habitable again. All Duplication of Benefits requirements will be upheld.

These funds are used by the internal Housing and Community Development Department to fund resident recovery activities requested through a public application process. Since there is no external vendor or subrecipient agreement for this project, the City has documented the obligation of these funds via an Interagency Agreement between Housing & Neighborhood Services Administration and the Housing and Community Development Department, fully executed on December 16, 2024.

This program launched for City residents in March 2025. Program staff are first utilizing funding sources with expenditure deadlines that come before ARPA expenditure deadlines, and as such, have not yet expended any ARPA dollars for this program. In next year's 2026 report, the City will be able to report on program impact specifically as it relates to ARPA-funded activities under this project.

Health and Social Equity Initiatives

Coordinated Social Services: Community Support Hubs & Shared Services Organization

The pandemic has increased prior concerns about mental health in our communities as economic anxiety, feelings of loneliness and depressive disorders continue to rise. Neighborhood-based intervention services are a key element to addressing barriers to access that communities can experience when in crisis. The increased stigma to mental health and social services coupled with barriers to accessing these services increase negative outcomes in the social determinants of health. Neighborhood-based, trauma-informed wraparound services meet individuals in an environment where they are comfortable, provide relief quickly, and provides appropriate care and support by local organizations who are known and trusted by neighborhood residents.

Through a competitive solicitation process, the City identified Pinellas Community Foundation as the subrecipient for $8.58M of the ARPA funds to establish a network of coordinated, neighborhood-based, trauma-informed Community Support Hubs (Hubs) and establish an administrative support/shared services organization (SSO) to build capacity in local nonprofits through December 2026. The Request for Proposals to identify and select the subrecipient was released in July 2022, with responses due in August 2022. Pinellas Community Foundation was selected as the subrecipient, and this appropriation was approved by City Council on November 3, 2022.

The Hubs will be located in neighborhoods that have suffered disproportionate impacts from the pandemic. The Hubs will provide trauma-informed counseling, care management, and assertive outreach as the core services available at each Hub. Each Hub will have the flexibility to add services that are responsive to community need. The Hubs will also have direct access to emergency funding to address crisis needs and stabilize the household. Services provided at the Hubs will be from local, trusted nonprofit organizations already knowledgeable of and embedded in the targeted communities.

Since the writing of the 2024 report, the collaborative partnership for St. Petersburg's Community Support Hubs completed the transition from pilot phase to implementation phase, with Gulf Coast JFCS leading the current phase of project implementation and People Empowering & Restoring Communities (PERC) as a collaborative partner. Essential to the concept of the Hubs is ensuring that residents receive the services they need in the ways that they need them. Using lessons learned through project start-up and using resident choice as a driving force, partners evaluated space and service needs and made adjustments to best serve the community as they moved into the implementation phase of the project.

The intention is to have two full-scale Hub locations by the end of 2026, with a sustainability plan in place to continue to serve residents in those locations and scale operations as needed. Hub designs may be diversified by location need and may include a combination of physical locations and/or co-located branches using space of existing community providers. Some service needs may be accomplished through the use of a mobile element of service, to increase accessibility for residents. The Hubs are intended to fill gaps in services, ease access to care, and demonstrate improvement in the lives of those served. As such, the model may change to meet emerging needs of the community, as determined by data and with approval by the City. All Hubs opened will be driven by community input and data to ensure maximum resident accessibility to the core services identified above.

The Shared Services Organization (SSO) is a model that provides nonprofit organizational capacity services to small and grassroots nonprofits. The SSO will establish a network of vendors to provide various vital administrative services for local community nonprofits to build their capacity and better prepare for funding opportunities to further their impact in our community. Nonprofit organizations that serve residents in St. Pete will be eligible to apply for these free capacity-building and support services, based on organization capacity level and need, including:

- Program design and planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation
- Financial management including accounting, payroll, and other finance activities
- Grant writing
- Communications and marketing
- Technology, including general IT for the organization and staff, database creation for metrics, project management, and operations
- Legal and other operational and administrative support
- Leadership training for staff and board, including professional development
- Organizational strategic planning, assessment, and development
- Training resources

Pinellas Community Foundation created a competitive solicitation process to establish the Shared Services Organization project. The SSO will be administered by The Hypatia Collaborative, a local shared services organization that acts as the administrative hub and umbrella organization for the network of nonprofit consultants and vendors. Hypatia's agreement with Pinellas Community Foundation commenced on February 1, 2024, and extends through 2026.

Hypatia launched their application for non-profit organizations to receive services in May 2024. The first 18-month cohort, comprised of ten (10) non-profit organizations, launched on July 1, 2024. Since the writing of the 2024 report, Hypatia has recruited and onboarded a total of 68 non-profit organizations that serve city residents, which are spread over seven (7) total cohorts. Each cohort receives services and support over 18 months, systematically working through their client services plan and making progress towards the strategic vision determined at the beginning of the process for each organization. Hypatia's project model includes evaluation of SSO services and their impact on the client organizations, the first findings of which will be available for Cohort 1 at the end of 2025.

Food Security Initiatives

There are three food security projects funded with $1.179 million in ARPA funds: the Healthy Neighborhood Store Program, the Summer Food Program, and the Healthy Food Action Plan.

The City identified the St. Petersburg Free Clinic as the subrecipient to implement a **Healthy Neighborhood Store Program** in census tracts designated as low income, low access (LI/LA) areas. There are numerous corner/convenience stores in these census tracts, but healthy food options are not widely available to neighborhood residents. The Request for Proposals was released in July 2022, with responses due in August 2022. The St. Petersburg Free Clinic was selected as the subrecipient for this project, which was approved and appropriated by City Council on November 3, 2022. Approximately

$535,000 was allocated to this subrecipient to design, implement, and monitor the program for a two-year period.

The St. Petersburg Free Clinic (SPFC) collaborates with neighborhood store owners in these low income, low access areas to incentivize these businesses to expand healthy food options at an affordable cost to their customers. SPFC supports stores in establishing infrastructure, marketing plans, and a sustainable business model to for stocking nutritious food, including fresh fruits and vegetables, low-fat proteins, whole grain items, and low-fat dairy products or dairy alternatives. SPFC also assists in subsidizing food costs for the stores as they ramp up this programming and helps business owners navigate the process of accepting EBT, WIC, etc. if they do not already do so. The initiative also provides health education for store owners and surrounding community members to better understand the benefits of a healthy, balanced diet.

Since the writing of the 2024 report, SPFC continued their FRESH Pace program at six stores in USDA-designated low-income, low-access areas. While some stores stopped complying with program requirements and were removed from the program despite efforts by SPFC to support them through the identified issues, SPFC onboarded new stores to fill those vacancies in the program. The 6 stores actively launched at this time are:

- Rajax Meat and Food Mart - 2327 Dr. MLK Jr. St. S.
- Lakeview Market - 1940 22nd Ave. S.
- Yara Food Mart - 1311 22nd St. S.
- Midtown Supermarket - 1856 18th Ave. S.
- Three Brothers Market – 1040 16th St. S.
- Taste of the Islands Marketplace – 2255 34th St. S.

Although the program's main intent was to increase access to affordable, healthy foods, the project scope additionally included a health education component. Throughout the project performance period, SPFC held three health screening events on Saturdays at participating FRESH Pace stores. Customers were offered blood pressure and blood glucose checks by SPFC Health Center staff, as well as information on SPFC's Health Center services. SPFC's Health Center provides comprehensive primary and specialty care services to adults who are uninsured and 300% or below the federal poverty line.

While the ARPA funding for this project has been fully expended, the City has allocated additional funding through the FY25 budgeting process to continue supporting the existing stores through this program. Additionally, SPFC is exploring other sources of funding to further expand the program's success to more stores within the LI/LA areas in the city and continue progress towards filling the gap in access to healthy foods.

The City has allocated $100,000 of the ARPA funds to support the **Summer Food Program** over a two-year period. These funds were used to improve the capacity of City sponsored sites to implement the USDA Summer Food Service Program and to increase quality and quantity of food delivered to youth at recreation centers. This project supported the Summer Food Program over three years (summer of

2022, 2023 and 2024), with the few remaining dollars being fully expended in summer 2024. In addition to providing fresh and healthy food to youth, this project has allowed the City team to obtain refrigeration equipment that expands their ability to deliver fresh food and milk items to rec centers across the city and keep those items within the safe temperature range.

Additionally in the food security space, the City has allocated $544,000 to develop and implement a **Healthy Food Action Plan**. The Healthy Food Action Plan is a community planning project that intends to address the social, environmental, economic, and physical aspects of food access and food security within the Healthy Food Priority Areas of St. Petersburg. The goal of the Healthy Food Action Plan is to increase health outcomes by developing food access projects. The mission is to connect residents to resources through partnerships and guide future food and health policy.

The Healthy Food Action Plan focuses on 16 census tracts designated by the City as Healthy Food Priority Areas. These census tracts have limited access to a variety of food retail options, with transportation and income barriers being of particular concern within the Healthy Food Priority Areas. The Healthy Food Action Plan utilizes the U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service tool, Food Access Research Atlas, to identify which areas of St. Pete are considered Healthy Food Priority Areas. Each community identified has a 20% or greater prevalence of poverty and a significant or majority number of residents without access to a healthy food retailer within .5 miles, considering walkability and no vehicle access.

The Healthy Food Action Plan timeline runs from July 2023 through December 2025 and will be implemented in four phases:

1. **Discover: Assessments and Data Collection** - *July 2023 - October 2023*
2. **Envision: Community Planning and Engagement** - *November 2023 - February 2024*
3. **Design: Action Plan Development and Community Reporting** - *March 2024 - July 2024*
4. **Deliver: Grantmaking and Implementation -** *July 2024 - December 2025*

A portion of ARPA funds ($240,000) for this project cover the personnel costs for the Planner II hired to implement this project internally, as well as the cost of hiring part-time Neighborhood Food Advocates to assist in the community engagement and surveying portion of collecting resident input to inform the plan. All administrative costs were obligated and reported to the Treasury as required – see Project 19544-1: Administrative Costs Post 12/31/2024 in the Project Inventory below for details.

The remainder of the funds ($304,000) are allocated to the Community Food Grant Program. Informed by the Healthy Food Action Plan, the Community Food Grant Program aims to improve health outcomes for all residents in St. Petersburg by funding local non-profit agencies that will implement projects that align with the Healthy Food Action Plan (HFAP) Areas of Focus and strategies. The Community Food Grant Program seeks to empower local stakeholders to develop innovative solutions and create a more inclusive and resilient food landscape for all residents.

The City set aside up to $300,000 in grants, in tiers of $10,000, $25,000, and $50,000, to area nonprofit organizations that submitted projects aligning with one or more of the Healthy Food Action Plan's areas of focus that include supporting local food economy and community building, improving food access and security, and strengthening community health and wellness. Projects are implemented under a performance period of January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025.

The Healthy Food Action Plan report is now complete and is available for review at [this link here](#).

The Community Food Grant Program was launched in the summer of 2024. Through a grant review committee, 9 organizations were selected to receive funds through this program. All agreements were executed in December 2024, ahead of the obligation deadline. See summary below of selected non-profits and their impact areas funded under this grant:

- $10,000 tier:
  - **The Kind Mouse** – alleviating childhood hunger
  - **Good Neighbors** – increasing food access for seniors with mobile food delivery and pop-up pantries
  - **Daystar Life Center** – promoting gardening and nutrition education, providing fresh produce to prevent chronic disease
- $25,000 tier:
  - **15th Street Farm** – providing local produce, prepared meals, and urban agriculture resources to low-income participants of partner organizations
- $50,000 tier:
  - **First United Methodist Church** – food pantries in 4 elementary schools within Healthy Food Priority Areas in the city ($45,000 awarded)
  - **360Eats** – CommUnity Kitchen providing prepared meals in a food truck choice model at Sanderlin Center, using upcycled ingredients
  - **Evara Health** – Food Rx program, providing food insecure clinic patients with $50 vouchers for fruit and vegetables to build and maintain medically appropriate diets for chronic disease remediation
  - **Reach St. Pete** – free mobile grocery store bus, a mobile choice food pantry with a focus on fresh ingredients and educational resources
  - **St. Pete Free Clinic** – 119,000 meals-worth of food support for their no-cost grocery store and FRESH pantry

Youth Opportunity Grants

The City has allocated $946,365 for a Youth Opportunity Grants program, a monthly cash disbursement program that provides $500 a month for 12 months to at least 88 young adults who are former foster youth and are not engaged in formal aftercare services through the child welfare system. Direct services such as counseling, case management, parenting programs, and life skills development are available for program participants to meet their needs and assist in maintaining stability during their transition into adulthood.

Participants served will be young adults aged 18-27, who are former foster youth, and have a strong tie to St. Pete (live, work, or attend school within city limits). Participants served will fall under several of the Treasury's definitions of impacted households and communities: including low- or moderate-income, experiencing unemployment, experiencing food or housing insecurity, and households that qualify for CHIP/CCDF/Medicaid.

The goal of this project is to have an upstream impact on a population that faces many barriers in their transition to adulthood, because of their experience in the child welfare system. While there are formal after care services for young adults who age out of traditional foster care once they turn 18, many do not choose to enroll or do not stay enrolled long-term. More than 23,000 youth age out every year in the US. The Annie E. Casey Foundation found that only about one-quarter of 18-year-olds remain in foster care until their 19th birthdays. Additionally, there are youth who were removed from their homes and placed with relatives or guardians and not technically in traditional foster care. Although these young adults face similar outcomes as their counterparts who aged out of traditional foster care, many are ineligible for the same after care services. As a result, many of these young adults have limited skills or family support needed for a successful transition to adulthood. These young adults often have little to no resources, lack trust in any system that may seek to help them, and are carrying the weight and burden of their trauma along the way. This population faces well-documented poor outcomes, including high rates of experiencing homelessness, incarceration, human trafficking, significant mental health issues, and substance dependence.

An underlying factor in these poor outcomes for former foster youth is economic insecurity, a component of which is income volatility – the degree to which one's income fluctuates up and down over a period of time. One tool that has been tested in other cities across the country to help reduce income volatility are programs that give financial assistance directly to program participants with no strings attached.

These direct disbursement programs provide an economic floor to the participants, they do not cover the participants' entire monthly expenses. One example is the SEED program in Stockton, California, which provided $500 a month for 24 months to participants. SEED's research showed that the intervention "reduced income volatility, or the month-to-month income fluctuations that households face; unconditional cash enabled residents to find full-time employment; recipients were healthier, showing less depression and anxiety and enhanced wellbeing; and the intervention alleviated financial scarcity creating new opportunities for self-determination, choice, goal-setting, and risk-taking" (SEED, Preliminary Analysis: SEED's first year).

The use of ARPA funds for this Youth Opportunity Grants project is intended to create a positive, upstream impact in the lives of former child welfare transition-aged youth who need and deserve an investment in their future to give them a chance to become who they are, with fewer barriers along the way as they gain a foothold in their future.

Ready for Life, Inc., a local non-profit organization that serves former foster youth, was selected to administer this program through a competitive solicitation process. The 2-year agreement with Ready for Life was executed on June 6, 2024. After working on program start-up planning, and then a delay from Hurricanes Helene and Milton, Cohort 1 launched in December 2024, comprised of 28 participants. Cohort 2 launched in April 2025, comprised of an additional 28 participants. Cohort 3 applications are open at the time of writing this report, and will officially launch in September 2025. Depending on total eligible applications received for Cohort 3, it is possible that a fourth cohort will come online to reach the minimum 88 total participants served throughout the program. Each cohort will last 12 months, and all cohorts will conclude prior to the ARPA expenditure deadline at the end of 2026.

Impact Monitoring

Finally, the City has allocated $405,000 through 2026 for a City position to manage the contracts for ARPA-funded projects, including establishing metrics to measure community impacts intended by these funding uses. This position works with the subrecipients and grantees to track progress and establish feedback loops to ensure timely adjustments to these initiatives as lessons are learned. This position also directly manages four of the eight ARPA-funded projects and maintains frequent communication with the points of contact for the remaining ARPA projects to conduct all required reporting. All administrative costs were obligated and reported to the Treasury as required – see Project 19544-1: Administrative Costs Post 12/31/2024 in the Project Inventory below for details.

Community Engagement

At the beginning of the process to develop the City's spending plan for the ARPA funds, the City felt it was important to gather input from the community before allocating these funds to specific projects due to requests from the public to be involved in the decision-making process and the emphasis on community participation noted in the ARPA itself. At the end of July 2021, the City held three in-person workshops to receive community input on how the funds should be used. They were held in three different geographic areas of the City to help ensure we received input from all citizens throughout the City.

In-Person Workshop Dates and Locations:

1. Monday, July 26, 6-8 p.m. at Enoch Davis Center (1111 18th Ave. S.)
2. Tuesday, July 27, 6-8 p.m. at JW Cate Rec Center (5801 22nd Ave. N.)
3. Wednesday, July 28, 6-8 p.m. at Willis S. Johns Rec Center (6635 Dr. MLK Jr. St. N.)

We also included a virtual participation option for those citizens who were unable to attend an in-person workshop. The public comment option was closed on Friday, August 6, 2021. A link to the City's website with information on this public input process is below:

American Rescue Plan Act (stpete.org)

The purpose of the series of workshops and virtual participation option for community feedback was to help prioritize which areas of impact receive funds. Feedback collected during these workshops was aggregated and directly influenced the ranking of priorities for receiving funds.

The City outlined the following areas of impact eligible for the funds, based on the federal guidelines included in the ARPA:

1. Infrastructure (water, stormwater, sewer, and broadband),
2. Housing affordability and support,
3. Health and social equity,
4. Economic recovery/resilience, and
5. Public health/safety.

Through the three in-person meetings and the online public input, the City received feedback from 557 citizens. The number 557 consisted of:

- 26 total tables at the three in-person meetings (each table counts as one)
- 157 individual cards collected at these meetings (each card counts as one)
- 374 participants online (each online submission counts as one)

The citizens were asked to provide rankings of the five areas of impact: Infrastructure (water, stormwater, sewer, and broadband), housing affordability and support, health and social equity, economic recovery/resilience, and public health/safety. The categories were ranked from 1 to 5 with 1 being the highest rank and 5 the lowest.

Based on citizen ranking here are the results as a weighted average score:

CATEGORY	SCORE
1. Housing and Affordability Support	2.25
2. Health and Social Equity	2.66
3. Infrastructure	2.82
4. Economy Recovery/Resilience	3.41

5. Public Health/Safety	3.86

In addition to the ranking of the five areas of impact, the City also allowed for qualitative feedback on the comment card and online. The following issues were seen in many of the responses:

- Housing/Homelessness
- Phillis Wheatly Rise to Reading
- Sickle Cell
- Reproductive Health
- Increased Bus Service
- Childhood Development
- Gun Violence
- Food Access
- Flooding
- Mental Health
- Streets, Sidewalks, and Alleys
- Climate Change, Seawalls
- Job Training/Income
- Individual Grants

Some examples of the qualitative feedback are included below:

"The cost of rent in the area has gotten completely out of hand. We need more affordable housing."

"We want our City officials to stay focused on the health, safety, and economic security of our communities, particularly people of color working to make ends meet…."

"A very meaningful share of funding should be allocated NOW to accelerate completion of the Southside's many current community-based designed improvement projects as embodied in their Warehouse Arts District/Deuces Live Joint Action Plan."

"*Need more funds going to early childhood development*."

"Case managers for families and individuals trying to access services for adults with disabilities, especially adults who move to St Pete (mental and behavioral health)"

"It is very important to focus on bread and butter issues. Jobs, income and housing that is affordable."

"Our City seems to be economically recovering on its own. Housing, housing, housing., (affordable that is)"

Those with personal experience are the experts and know the barriers and the solutions to address identified gaps. The above Use of Funds section describes the community-driven nature of Affordable Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing Wraparound Services, Scattered Site Family Shelter, the Community Support Hubs, Shared Services Organization, Healthy Neighborhood Store Program, Healthy Food Action Plan, and Youth Opportunity Grants. Community-driven initiatives cannot be transactional – seeking only input. There must be a shared ownership, and shared power, to design, implement, and measure impact to truly make lasting change. The community-driven feedback loops are imperative to identify long-standing challenges and to solve them timely.

The **Community Support Hubs** project requires the subrecipient to create a committee comprised of targeted neighborhood residents with a community-informed approach to assist in review and recommendations related to proposals submitted for the Hubs, identify Hub locations, be a conduit for feedback loops related to service effectiveness and trends identified for service needs, and assist in community based participatory research. It is anticipated that through feedback loops, barriers will be identified and the need for analysis of policy, procedure, and process issues will arise to address those barriers. Pinellas Community Foundation has engaged Reed Community Consulting in the evaluation process for this project, and to convene the Hub Community Liaisons board. Through a broad recruitment and blind selection process, the Hub Community Liaisons are comprised of 10 community residents who represent the areas where the Hubs project is focused. As the second Hub location is opened, the group can grow to a maximum of 15 total members. The first Hub Community Liaisons meeting occurred on July 13, 2024 and they continue to meet regularly to stay engaged in the mission. Residents receive a stipend for their service on the board.

The **Shared Services Organization** has created an Ethics and Selection Committee (ESC), which is comprised of a group of 5 residents who represent various industries, to be part of the SSO's operational process. Committee members have the option of receiving a stipend for their service. The Ethics and Selection Committee's purpose is to ensure fairness and objectivity in following the documented processes in approving non-profit organizations as clients, as well as selecting vendors to join the vendor network through the RFP processes. The ESC will also engage in the evaluation process and be a conduit for community feedback to be heard.

The **Youth Opportunity Grants** project sought lived-experience input in the design stage. Two focus groups were conducted with young adults ages 18-32 who had prior involvement in the foster care system (15 total participants). The sessions were held on site at a non-profit that provides support to these young adults, who also provided gift card incentives to encourage the young adults to participate The intent of these sessions was to get their input on the idea of doing a direct disbursement pilot, what elements they thought would be important for program design, and learn more about their experiences in life after exiting the foster care system. They shared openly and had a robust discussion. There was consensus that this type of program would help them "maneuver a lot better" financially, "get on their feet," "it would be a blessing," and that it felt good to see their population be recognized and prioritized in this way. They shared that if they were program participants, they would spend the money on paying bills, paying rent, buying groceries, save up for a car, pay for childcare, and be able to pay for unexpected emergencies without the cascade effect throughout their budget. A theme also emerged that there are youth who have significant history in the foster care system, but if they don't meet the legal classification of officially 'aging out' then they aren't eligible for many of the post-foster care support programs. That information has helped guide the program design process significantly, as the City created additional eligibility criteria for those young adults who face the same barriers coming out of foster care but may not exactly meet the typical criteria.

The St. Pete Free Clinic (SPFC), through the **Healthy Neighborhood Store Program**, surveyed store customers for their feedback, interviewed store managers about the program, and conducted a series surveys at food giveaway events they held. A summary of surveys and interviews are outlined below, produced from the SPFC's final impact report submitted to the City:

FRESH Pace Customer Survey:

A total of 97 customers responded, and all FRESH Pace stores that were active for at least 6 months at the close of the contract were represented to some degree in the customer responses.

- 85% of survey respondents reported that they have noticed changes in the types of food products available in the store.
- Due to the changes in types of food products, 80% of customers reported that they no longer need to shop at other stores, and an additional 12% reported that they still need to shop at other stores, but less often.
- 94% of survey respondents reported that they are satisfied with the variety of fresh produce and healthy food options available.
- 93% of survey respondents reported that the prices of fresh produce are reasonable compared to other grocery stores or markets.
- 95% of survey respondents report that they are able to purchase foods from these stores that support their dietary needs.
- 94% of survey respondents rated the freshness of the produce available as either excellent or good.
- 78% of survey respondents reported that they are aware of the recipe cards available at the store and have found them helpful in preparing meals with the available food products.
- 97% of survey respondents reported that they would recommend this store to others based on the availability of fresh produce and healthy food options.
- 40% of respondents reported living in 33712, and 29% reported living in 33705. Only 2% of customers reported living in a zip code outside of South St. Petersburg.

As outlined by SPFC: "The customer survey reveals that FRESH Pace customers are generally very satisfied with their shopping experience. Many respondents have noticed an increased variety of healthy products, which has made them less reliant on shopping at other stores. Many customers noticed the affordability of FRESH Pace items compared to large supermarkets or grocery stores. Additionally, the SPFC recipe cards have been helpful for shoppers in meal preparation. Overall, most customers report that they would recommend shopping at this store to others. The zip code data indicates the vast majority of customers live in surrounding neighborhoods."

FRESH Pace Holiday Turkey Promotion Survey:

A total of 363 customers responded and included representation from all active FRESH Pace stores at the time of survey distribution (Lakeview Market, Midtown Supermarket, Rajax Meat & Food Mart, Yara Food Mart, and Wildwood Meat Market).

- 99% of customers reported that they would shop at the FRESH Pace store again for fresh food.
- 71% of customers lived in either 33712 or 33705 zip codes

Although this survey was brief, the results continue to indicate that customers recognize FRESH Pace stores as a resource for fresh food and that the majority of customers live in the surrounding neighborhoods.

FRESH Pace Egg Promotion Survey:

A total of 124 customers responded to a brief three-question survey after participating in the egg promotional event.

100% of respondents said that shopping at this store has made it either much easier (95%) or somewhat easier (5%) for them to buy fresh and healthy foods.

100% of respondents reported that they would recommend this store to others looking for fresh, affordable food.

The last question was a free text question asking customers if there is anything else they would like to share. Notable responses included:

- "So much fresh and healthy options for an affordable price."
- "My favorite store in the area for healthy foods."
- "Love this place. They are for the people who live in this neighborhood."
- "I love the energy here."

Responses from this survey further demonstrate that the goal to make healthy food more easily accessible has been achieved.

Store Owner/Manager Interviews – highlights from these interviews included below:

- "We are constantly trying new products. Some recent items are brussels sprouts, zucchini, yellow squash, fresh herbs (thyme, parsley), etc. I never thought those items would sell, and FRESH Pace has helped me experiment. Every two to three weeks, we try to implement something new. I also try to match the produce that we have available to SPFC's recipe cards, making sure we have everything for customers to make the recipes. **Since starting FRESH Pace, we have doubled our produce sales as a store."** – Rajax Meat & Food Mart
- "I tell the customers about the SPFC recipes and try to keep the products that are on the recipe cards in stock. We have new items like potatoes, onions, cabbage, lettuce, tomatoes, bananas, eggs, beets, carrots celery, turnips, etc. I also try to answer the requests of customers; recently we got rutabagas because of a customer request. **If products don't sell and they are about to go bad, I do giveaways where I provide fresh food to customers for free. I also am continuing to compost through the partnership SPFC set up with me and St. Pete Youth Farm."** – Lakeview Market
- "I will say, I was unsure about the whole thing, **for convenience stores to have these items, it's risky, but people buy them**. Probably because the prices are low and there's a large variety of food… The FRESH Pace coolers have been the main thing, we did not have as much space before for fresh things. Now, I am proud of what I see." – Yara Food Mart
- "FRESH Pace has actually led us to bring the prices down of other healthy items in the store. We find that it's easiest for customers and causes less confusion if we use the same math (25% over purchase price) for all healthy items. And people buy more of it when it's cheaper." – Yara Food Mart
- "We were able to add herbs like parsley, cilantro, thyme, and basil. We also added soy milk and almond milk, as well as unsalted butter. We reduced the prices of our vegetables and fruits… The way that it looks, the presentation of the coolers and the produce stands is a success. We have more variety of fresh foods and the produce stands replaced our chips section. **I'm all in, and the owner of the store is interested in continuing too**." – Midtown Supermarket

This excerpt from the **Healthy Food Action Plan** report outlines how community engagement was a central element of crafting the plan: “Healthy St. Pete is enacting the Healthy Food Action Plan using an Asset-Based Community Development approach. This framework for participatory engagement in planning leverages the already effective networks and organizations within a community to strengthen the capacity of programs to achieve their goals.” “Throughout the Healthy Food Action Plan project, Healthy St. Pete strives to meet all expectations of authentic community engagement, including accessibility, transparency, and accountability, to the capacity available.”

“Every resident in the Healthy Food Priority Area communities was invited to share their vision…” – Healthy St. Pete focused on making engagement informative, accessible, and reciprocal. Event marketing was carried out in person at event locations and in the surrounding community with fliers, rack cards, postcards, and yard signs. Additional marketing tactics included paid ads in periodicals like The Weekly Challenger, random-selection mailing, event tabling, direct surveying at locations like food pantries and food drives, and through the City of St. Petersburg’s and Healthy St. Pete’s digital channels including email newsletters and social media posts.

“Community Food Forums were held at recreation centers within the Healthy Food Priority Areas at varying times and days. Snacks were provided, parking was free, and all locations were directly accessible by public transportation. School-aged childcare was available for the duration of the forum and participation incentives were offered as reimbursement for time and information given to the project. Virtual options were also offered. In total, there were 21 participants in attendance at the Community Food Forums.”

“The Community Food Survey was released to the public in conjunction with Community Food Forums to expand the number of residents able to share their voices and ideas and to offer an alternative to in-person attendance. The survey ran from November 2023 to June 2024, with a total of 181 responses. It was designed to gather information about the food environment specific to the respondents’ neighborhoods, like the assets they rely on for food resources and their experience of interacting with the food system in St. Petersburg. The survey was offered on print collateral via a QR code and a link on the Healthy St. Pete website in English and Spanish. Outreach initiatives included handing out flyers at local businesses, recreation centers, and nonprofit and faith-based organizations. The Healthy St. Pete team also tabled at local community events and offered the survey in person on iPads and printed surveys. A Neighborhood Food Advocate, a community member familiar with the areas surveyed, was hired to assist with outreach plan design and survey implementation. This position assisted with survey responses and offered the opportunity for respondents to obtain clear communication of the Healthy Food Action Plan project intent, parameters, and timeline. A survey invitation postcard was also mailed in April 2024 to 2,000 addresses randomly chosen within the Healthy Food Priority Areas from City utility account data.”

“Community Reviews offered an additional opportunity for residents and partner organizations to hear what their fellow community members understand to be true of their experiences. Dates and locations were advertised on the survey postcard mailed to randomly selected residents in the Healthy Food Priority Areas as well as through the City’s social media sites, City of St. Petersburg and Healthy St. Pete websites, print materials like posters at the event location, and through the Healthy St. Pete newsletter. Survey results and food forum feedback were shared as they would be formatted in the final report in slideshow format. Participants reviewed and commented on the data’s accuracy of collective sentiment and visual presentation. There was also the opportunity to contribute novel and innovative ideas or feelings that were not represented in the unpublished results. All relevant feedback was incorporated into the final version of this report."

In addition to project-specific community engagement that is tailored to each initiative, the City's Administration also provides status reports periodically to City Council on the ARPA plan and allocation at City Council meetings. The public has the opportunity to provide public comment at these meetings.

Labor Practices

The City has not allocated any ARPA funding to an infrastructure project or capital expenditures at this time. This section will be completed in future reports if applicable.

Use of Evidence

The programs described in the Use of Funds section incorporate evidence-based interventions and/or program evaluation. Additional detail on the use of evidence is included in the individual project inventories later in this report.

The programs in the housing initiative category will measure the number of affordable units produced through the **Affordable Multi-Family Developments** and number of eligible households served through the other housing-related projects. Specifically for the **Scattered Site Family Shelter**, the project will be measured by the number of families being sheltered and the number of families then permanently housed after shelter. The project will utilize the Housing First approach and provide safe, low-barrier, temporary shelter to literally homeless families with minor children. These are families that have previously lived in the City of St. Petersburg's Qualified Census Tract, and/or are at 65% AMI, understanding that they have been disproportionately affected by the impacts of COVID-19. Utilizing scattered site family shelter, with the intent to have some families shelter in place, is a moderate, evidence-based intervention and a best practice to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. The **Permanent Supportive Housing Wraparound Services** project also utilizes a Housing First approach. The subrecipient, Boley Centers, uses a best practice model of Supportive Housing where staff use evidence-based practices in their method of service delivery including techniques from Critical Time Intervention, Motivational Interviewing, and States of Change. These practices increase housing stability, increase motivation, and strengthen commitment among participants to engage in these supportive services. The PSH Wraparound Services project tracks number of participants served, the types of supportive services they receive, and the housing retention rate among their participants.

The programs launching in the Health and Social Equity initiative category incorporate program evaluation and evidence-based interventions. For the **Community Support Hubs** project, Pinellas Community Foundation has contracted with Reed Community Consulting to conduct a multi-year program evaluation. See evaluation details in the project inventory below.

The Hypatia Collaborative's research team will conduct the program evaluation for the **Shared Services Organization**. See evaluation details in the project inventory below.

The **Healthy Neighborhood Stores Program** is an evidence-based intervention utilizing tools from the Nutrition Environment Measures Survey developed by the University of Pennsylvania. The organization selected to lead this initiative, St. Petersburg Free Clinic, is required to assess enrolled neighborhood store capacity and performance. SPFC is also required to provide information to the City on barriers and challenges identified, and lessons learned through implementation of this program in the low income, low access areas in the City. This information is utilized in the City's strategic Healthy Food Action Plan development process and priority programs from the plan will be implemented. The ultimate goal of these initiatives is to eliminate low food access areas in the City. Data will be collected to monitor progress toward that goal.

The **Youth Opportunity Grants** project includes a research and evaluation component conducted by researchers from University of South Florida – St. Petersburg. See evaluation details in the project inventory below. In addition to conducting an evaluation, this project design incorporates learnings from other similar demonstrations and experiments, such as Stockton, California's SEED program.

Performance Report

These ARPA funds are targeted toward closing gaps in the social determinants of health for residents of our City. Many city residents are housing cost burdened and there is a large gap in the rate of homeownership. A disproportionate number of our neighborhoods carry the burden of experiencing violence, food insecurity, educational gaps, and employment gaps. Local trusted nonprofit organizations who are closer to these issues are often underinvested and unable to build capacity to compete for funding to provide needed services. The various initiatives described in this report work together to address these gaps. For example, as more affordable housing is developed, the trauma of housing insecurity and threat of eviction or fear of homelessness is alleviated. The Hubs address trauma issues to stabilize individuals and families and create a stable foundation for housing, employment, child safety, and future goal attainment. The services provided through the Hubs are only effective if locally engaged and trusted partners are providing those services. The SSO initiative supports the organizations providing these much-needed services in the community. The Food Systems initiatives seek to eliminate low food access areas in these same neighborhoods. Together, these initiatives improve the community metrics for targeted neighborhoods and improve the health and safety of these neighborhoods. At the end of the ARPA funding (December 2026), residents served in these underinvested neighborhoods will see marked improvements in social determinants of health outcomes.

The Housing Affordability and Support initiatives will collect data on the number of affordable housing units developed through these funds, the number of families served, the number of families who exit to permanent housing, and the number of participants retaining their housing.

The Youth Opportunity Grants project will include a research and evaluation component, which will measure the impact that the additional funds received each month has on the participants' income volatility and mental well-being.

The Healthy Neighborhood Stores Program collects data on the enrolled stores' business operations as it pertains to procuring and selling healthy food, and the impact the store has on increasing access to healthy, affordable food options within those neighborhoods. This information feeds into the Healthy Food Action Plan initiative, which also gathers data and community input to identify the path forward for a sustained, inclusive food system in the City.

Research and evaluation are built into the Community Support Hubs project on multiple levels. In addition to a community-level evaluation, program monitoring is conducted by the City and Pinellas Community Foundation, to assess resident-level service and treatment outcomes.

Additionally, the City is utilizing ARPA funds for a full-time staff member dedicated to managing ARPA-funded projects and tracking performance measures and community impact. This staff member, titled

ARPA Impact Monitor, directly manages four of the eight ARPA-funded projects and maintains frequent communication with the points of contact for the remaining ARPA projects. This allows the ARPA Impact Monitor to have a bird's eye view of how these projects overlap and can work synergistically for highest impact. They will also be responsible for the feedback loops described herein and utilizing lessons learned and trends identified to address policy and practice gaps in the City and in the region where appropriate (i.e., county run systems). These feedback loops, data collection, and community impact monitoring will provide the City with information related to gaps and future investment opportunities. For systems change to occur, it is important that these initiatives are not evaluated in silos, but are pieces of the big picture where, if working together, sustainable change can occur.

The vast majority of these initiatives being implemented through the use of the funds are new to the City of St. Pete. These are designed, in part, because of other initiatives of the City that have highlighted barriers and/or gaps in interventions. It is through the availability, and strategic use, of these funds that the City can make progress towards its vision of opportunities for all who live in St. Petersburg.

PROJECT INVENTORY

Project 19015: ARPA Housing Administration

Funding amount: $340,000

Project Expenditure Category: 7.1 - Administrative Expenses

Project Overview

The City originally allocated $500,000 of the ARPA funds to cover the City's administrative costs for the various ARPA-funded housing programs during the life of the ARPA program. Prior to the December 31, 2024 obligation deadline, the City reallocated $160,000 from this project to contribute funds to emergency relief from natural disasters as outlined in the 2023 Interim Final Rule. Updates related to that new ARPA project are included in that specific section below.

The City will use the funding to cover allocations of salaries and benefits for housing staff who perform duties related to the ARPA housing programs. The funding may also be used for other administrative expenses that may be deemed necessary and appropriate to efficiently and effectively manage the ARPA housing programs. The Housing and Community Development Department will follow the rules and regulations in 2 CFR Part 200 related to administrative costs.

An appropriation for this use of funds was approved by City Council on March 23, 2022.

This funding is being used for administrative costs to manage all goals and objectives included in the above Housing Affordability & Support strategies. All administrative costs were obligated and reported to the Treasury as required – see Project 19544-1: Administrative Costs Post 12/31/2024 in the Project Inventory below for details.

Use of Evidence

This project will not be used for evidence-based interventions, the goal is to support programs as outlined above.

Performance Report

The mandatory performance indicators for projects under the Housing Assistance (2.2), Long-Term Housing Security (2.15) and Housing Support: Other Housing Assistance (2.18) Expenditure Categories are not applicable to this project due to this project being administrative in nature and not providing direct assistance to individuals/families.

Project 19544: ARPA Impact Monitor

Funding amount: $405,000

Project Expenditure Category: 7.1 - Administrative Expenses

Project Overview

The City has allocated $405,000 through 2026 for a City position to manage the contracts for ARPA-funded projects, including establishing metrics to measure community impacts intended by these funding uses. This position works with the subrecipients and grantees to track progress and establish feedback loops to ensure timely adjustments to these initiatives as lessons are learned. This position also directly manages four of the eight ARPA-funded projects and maintains frequent communication with the points of contact for the remaining ARPA projects to conduct all required reporting. All administrative costs were obligated and reported to the Treasury as required – see Project 19544-1: Administrative Costs Post 12/31/2024 in the Project Inventory below for details.

Use of Evidence

This project will not be used for evidence-based interventions, the goal is to support programs as outlined above.

Performance Report

There are no mandatory reporting measures for this project as it is administrative in nature.

Project 19021: Scattered Site Family Shelter

Funding amount: $2,500,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.16 Long-Term Housing Security: Services for Unhoused Persons

Project Overview

The Scattered Site Family Shelter project will meet the emergent need of literally homeless families with minor children in the household. The project has the following objectives:

a. To provide a decent, safe, and sanitary shelter for homeless families in accordance with federal, state, and local guidelines.
b. To provide service delivery across the program that accentuates the importance of treating persons experiencing homelessness with respect, displaying sensitivity, acknowledging the trauma and state of crisis being experienced by those who are homeless.
c. To provide and participate in client centered case management services to assist them in becoming self-sufficient and to connect them with the appropriate agencies and available services, including permanent housing.

The project commenced on April 13, 2022 and the contract ended as of December 31, 2024. Families were sheltered utilizing master leased units and/or hotel/motel rooms with the focus of exiting shelter and entering permanent housing.

Use of Evidence

Families served will be literally homeless with a minor child in the household meeting the income criteria of 65% AMI and/or having their last previous address within a QCT.

The goal of this project is to utilize the Housing First approach and provide safe, low-barrier, temporary shelter to literally homeless families with minor children. The families are provided with case management and a housing specialist working towards securing permanent housing or in some cases, sheltering in place at the leased units. These are families that have previously lived in the City of St. Petersburg's Qualified Census Tract, and/or are at 65% AMI, understanding that they have been disproportionately affected by the impacts from Covid-19.

Utilizing scattered site family shelter, with the intent to have some families shelter in place, is a moderate, evidence-based intervention. The following are citations and/or links to articles where this has been studied and/or recommended as best practice particularly, to mitigate the spread of Covid-19.

- **Citation:** Somers JM, Moniruzzaman A, Patterson M, Currie L, Rezansoff SN, Palepu A, et al. (2017) A Randomized Trial Examining Housing First in Congregate and Scattered Site Formats. PLoS ONE 12(1): e0168745. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0168745
- https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/COVID-19-Homeless-System-Response-Alternative-Approaches-to-Isolation-and-Quarantine-Spaces.pdf
- https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/COVID-19-Homeless-System-Response-Rehousing-Out-of-Non-Congregate-Shelter-Maximizing-Placements.pdf

The total dollar amount of $2.5 million will be allocated towards this evidence-based intervention.

Performance Report

The mandatory performance indicators (below) for projects under the Long-Term Housing Security: Services for Unhoused Persons (2.16) Expenditure Category are not applicable to this project due to the nature of services provided.

1. Number of households receiving eviction prevention services (including legal representation): N/A
2. Number of affordable housing units preserved or developed: N/A

Below are the key performance indicators for this project. The desired impact is to allow for safe shelter for at least 112 families during the contract period. This will be measured by the number of families being sheltered.

- Goal: Number of families to be served annually: 56 per year, for a program goal of 112
  - **Actual number of families served to date (May 2022 – December 2024): 160 families**
- Goal: Number of families served nightly: 28 during full program operations, 15 as program ramped down
  - **Average number of families served nightly (through project duration): 25**
- Goal: Length of days a family will be enrolled in the Project: 90 days
  - **Average length of time a family was enrolled in the project: 117 days**
- Number/percentage of unduplicated families/persons that have exited to a permanent housing destination or were transferred to another program to continue receiving the same level of support after this program ended: **160 families à 100% of participants**
- Number of families that have been connected to mainstream resources: **160**

Project 19027: Permanent Supportive Housing Wraparound Services

Funding amount: $1,000,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.18 Housing Support: Other Housing Assistance

Project Overview

The City will use $1M of ARPA funds to provide case management and wraparound services for residents living in permanent supportive housing through December 2024.

The project is specific to participants who reside in households which qualify as low- and moderate-income (at or below 65% AMI) as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the county and size of household and are residents of St. Petersburg. The subrecipient will provide case management and wraparound services for residents living in permanent supportive housing, who experience chronic homelessness, substance abuse disorders, and severe and persistent mental illness. An estimated 75 unduplicated participants will be served annually. This program is intended to assist participants with obtaining and retaining their housing, by providing a wide range of case management and wraparound supports.

The Request for Proposal to identify and select the subrecipient was released in March 2022 and awarded on May 19, 2022, to Boley Centers, Inc. Boley Centers has been providing community-based services, treatment, and support to disabled persons, exclusively to low- income persons. The subrecipient team for this project is comprised of one Program Director, one ARNP, three Intensive Case Managers, one LPN, and one Peer Specialist. This project provides a funding source that is not typically available but is greatly needed to ensure residents living in permanent support housing can maintain their housing stability and receive all the services they need to achieve that outcome.

As of June 2025, this program is now complete, having served a total of 125 individual Heads of Household (a total of 146 individuals, including spouses and children in the household who also received services). Through the life of the program, the Boley team's support enabled program participants to maintain a 90% housing retention rate overall. The program has expended all allotted funds as of May 2025 and the contract period has ended. Boley sought funding to continue providing robust wraparound support to their clients who need intensive support to remain stably housed, however they did not receive funding to maintain the full team of staff providing that support. Boley intends to keep on the LPN and Peer Specialist to support their highest need clients in maintaining housing stability and supporting their mental and physical wellbeing.

Use of Evidence

Individuals and families served will be residents of Permanent Supportive Housing units in the City of St. Petersburg, who experience chronic homelessness, severe and persistent mental illness, and substance abuse. They will meet the income criteria of 65% AMI and/or having their last previous address within a QCT. The desired impact is to provide intensive case management services to at least 75 individuals annually during the contract period, for a total of 150 clients served over the full 2-year period. The goal is for 90% of clients to maintain their housing throughout the program.

The intent of this project is to utilize the Housing First approach to provide intensive wraparound case management services to the individuals and families identified above, who need that intensive support and on-site psychiatric treatment in order to obtain and maintain stability with their mental illness and substance abuse, so they can maintain their housing stability long-term. Each client is provided with a multidisciplinary team consisting of a Program Director, ARNP, LPN, Case Manager, and Peer Specialist. Once referrals are made, the team will engage with the resident to build rapport, assess their unique needs, meet each client where they're at, and develop a Housing Stabilization Plan that outlines the services the client needs. The case manager will make community referrals as needed, ensure the client has transportation to any of those appointments, assist the client in applying for benefits, and advocate for the client along the way. The case manager will support and encourage the client to meet with the ARNP team to discuss treatment options. The peer specialist will assist the case manager in providing transportation, providing referrals, and be a support to the client by mentoring, teaching skills, and being a role model (as the peer specialist has personal experience and has obtained the treatment needed to live independently and maintain employment). The ARNP and LPN will manage the medication process for clients, with the added support from the LPN to also assist with routine medical inquiries and assist clients in accessing medical and dental providers.

Per Boley's RFP Proposal, "Boley uses a best practice model of Supportive Housing where staff use evidence-based practices in their method of service delivery including techniques from Critical Time Intervention, Motivational Interviewing, and States of Change. These practices increase housing stability, build motivation and strengthen commitment among participants." "All staff are trained to provide Trauma Informed Care, a best practice approach that recognizes trauma symptoms and integrates their information into treatment planning and delivery."

Per HUD's report 'The Applicability of Housing First Models to Homeless Persons with Serious Mental Illness' (http://www.huduser.org/portal/publications/hsgfirst.pdf), they have "shown that Housing First permanent supportive housing models result in long-term housing stability, improved physical and behavioral health outcomes, and reduced use of crisis services such as emergency departments, hospitals, and jails."

According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition's report 'The Case For Housing First' (https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/Housing-First-Research.pdf), "Housing First is a proven model for addressing homelessness that prioritizes access to permanent, stable housing, linked with voluntary services as needed. Housing First recognizes that stable housing is a prerequisite for effective psychiatric and substance abuse treatment and for improving quality of life. Once stably housed, individuals are better able to take advantage of wrap-around services – to help support housing stability, employment, and recovery. Without stable housing, attaining these goals becomes much more difficult."

"Housing First rapidly ends homelessness, is cost-effective, and positively impacts quality of life and community functioning. This model is particularly effective among people who have been homeless for long periods of time and have serious psychiatric disabilities, substance use disorders, and/or other disabilities. Housing First results in higher rates of housing retention."

The total dollar amount of $1 million will be allocated towards this evidence-based intervention.

Performance Report

The mandatory performance indicators (below) for projects under the Housing Support: Other Housing Assistance (2.18) Expenditure Category are as follows:

- Number of households receiving eviction prevention services: N/A – not applicable to this project due to the nature of services provided.
- Number of affordable housing units preserved or developed: N/A - not applicable to this project due to the nature of services provided.

The goal is for at least 90% of participants to retain their housing ongoing and for the program to have a less than 10% discharge rate.

From October 2022 (when reporting started) through June 2025 (program end):

- 89.6% retention rate to date (112 out of 125 heads of household)
- 10.4% discharge rate from the program to date (13 out of 125)

Project 19230: Multifamily Affordable Housing

Funding amount: $20,303,505

Project Expenditure Category: 2.15 Long-Term Housing Security: Affordable Housing

Project Overview

This project provides gap funding for the development of new affordable multi-family housing in order to facilitate the production of 515 affordable housing units by the end of 2026. The City will combine other funding sources to fund 7 multifamily affordable housing proposals from developers. The selected projects will be those that will produce affordable housing units for households who are presumed to have been negatively impacted by COVID by Treasury's standards, including low- and moderate- income households, households that experienced unemployment, households that experienced food or housing insecurity, etc. The funding will come with affordability period requirements for each development. All 515 units are at 80% AMI or below, with the ARPA funding allocated to this project utilized for units at or below 65% of the Area Median Income.

The Request for Proposal/Notice of Funding Availability was issued on June 1, 2022, with responses due on June 30, 2022. There were seven multi-family responses received through the RFP. The project review team met on August 9, 2022 to evaluate the responses received. City Council approved appropriations for the selected investments on October 20, 2022. The City also plans to utilize General Fund dollars, Penny for Pinellas funding, and HCIP funding in order to provide support to all 7 projects that applied to this RFP.

On June 6, 2024, City Council approved a reallocation of funds among the multi-family affordable housing projects due to concerns about one of the original projects not meeting the required ARPA deadlines. The Ed White project was significantly delayed from its original timeline, and the allocated ARPA funds were not likely to be obligated or expended on time. Despite no longer being able to use ARPA funds to support the Ed White project, the City is still financially supporting this project through other funding sources.

City Administration then identified two shovel-ready affordable housing developments that better aligned with the required timelines. These changes to the ARPA allocation for affordable multi-family developments are reflected below.

Below is a list of each development, the allocation of ARPA funds for the project, and the total number of affordable housing units being created:

- Bear Creek Commons – $500,000 – 85 units
- Burlington Post II – $2,939,125 – 75 units
- Skyway Lofts II – $6,500,000 – 66 units
- Innovare – $3,426,166 – 50 units
- Vincentian Village – $1,000,000 – 73 units
- Flats on 4th – $4,394,157 – 80 units
- Palm Lake Urban Sanctuary - $1,544,057 – 86 units
- ~~Ed White – $5,938,314 – 70 units~~ (funds from this project were reallocated on June 6, 2024)

See the chart below for the breakdown of affordable units by each project:

Project	At 30% AMI or Below	At 50% AMI or Below	At 60% AMI or Below	At 80% AMI or Below	Total Units
Bear Creek Commons	18	0	42	25	**85**
Burlington Post II	12	0	39	24	**75**
Skyway Lofts II	11	0	39	16	**66**
Innovare	4	8	38	0	**50**
Vincentian Village	4	11	58	0	**73**
Flats on 4th	0	8	72	0	**80**
Palm Lake Urban Sanctuary	13	14	42	17	**86**
TOTALS	**62**	**41**	**330**	**82**	**515**

Use of Evidence

The pandemic underscored the importance of having a safe place to shelter and to raise families. The selected multi-family projects will address demand for and increase the supply of affordable housing units for low- and moderate-income households in St Petersburg. In addition to providing families with greater stability, affordable housing provides households with more money to spend on necessities such as health care and adequate food.

No evaluation is being conducted on this project.

Performance Report

The mandatory performance indicators for projects under the Long-Term Housing Security: Affordable Housing (2.15) Expenditure Category are listed below:

- Number of households receiving eviction prevention services (including legal representation) – Not applicable due to the nature of this project. This project is providing funding for the creation of affordable housing units, not providing services to residents.
- Number of affordable housing units preserved or developed – the intent is that 515 units are developed, see chart above for breakdown by project and by AMI. **To date, 135 units have been fully developed.**
    - As of June 2025, two developments have completed construction and are now fully occupied by residents (Innovare and Bear Creek Commons). An additional four developments have begun construction: Skyway Lofts II (89% complete), Vincentian Village (31% complete), Burlington Post II (32% complete), and Flats on 4th (1% complete). The remaining project has completed closing, obligated the funds, and will commence construction shortly.

Project 19100: Healthy Neighborhood Store Program

Funding amount: $535,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.22 Strong Healthy Communities: Neighborhood Features that Promote Health and Safety

Project Overview

St. Petersburg Free Clinic, Inc, a local agency, will develop and implement a Healthy Neighborhood Store Program in designated Qualified Census Tracts and USDA-designated “low income, low access” (LI/LA) census tracts of St. Petersburg to improve healthy food access and improve food security by establishing partnerships with small food retailers. The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionally impacted lower-income families, including those living in low income/low access areas (LI/LA) as designated by the US Department of Agriculture Food Access Research Atlas (USDA FARA), widening existing gaps.

The St. Petersburg Free Clinic (SPFC) collaborates with neighborhood store owners in these low income, low access areas to incentivize these businesses to expand healthy food options at an affordable cost to their customers. SPFC supports stores in establishing infrastructure, marketing plans, and a sustainable business model to for stocking nutritious food, including fresh fruits and vegetables, low-fat proteins, whole grain items, and low-fat dairy products or dairy alternatives. SPFC also assists in subsidizing food costs for the stores as they ramp up this programming and helps business owners navigate the process of accepting EBT, WIC, etc. if they do not already do so. The initiative also provides health education for store owners and surrounding community members to better understand the benefits of a healthy, balanced diet.

Since the writing of the 2024 report, SPFC continued their FRESH Pace program at six stores in USDA-designated low-income, low-access areas. While some stores stopped complying with program requirements and were removed from the program despite efforts by SPFC to support them through the identified issues, SPFC onboarded new stores to fill those vacancies in the program. The 6 stores actively launched at this time are:

- Rajax Meat and Food Mart - 2327 Dr. MLK Jr. St. S.
- Lakeview Market - 1940 22nd Ave. S.
- Yara Food Mart - 1311 22nd St. S.
- Midtown Supermarket - 1856 18th Ave. S.
- Three Brothers Market – 1040 16th St. S.
- Taste of the Islands Marketplace – 2255 34th St. S.

While the ARPA funding for this project has been fully expended, the City has allocated additional funding through the FY25 budgeting process to continue supporting the existing stores through this program. Additionally, SPFC is exploring other sources of funding to further expand the program’s success to more stores within the LI/LA areas in the city and continue progress towards filling the gap in access to healthy foods.

Use of Evidence

The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionally impacted lower-income families, including those living in low income/low access areas (LI/LA) as designated by the US Department of Agriculture Food Access Research Atlas (USDA FARA), widening existing gaps. According to the HHS, nationwide, low-wage workers lost jobs at nearly five times the rate of middle-wage workers and nearly half of lower-income families report that they or someone in their household had lost a job or taken a pay cut as the result of the pandemic. The losses in reliable income as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated long-standing disparities in access to healthy food for many families, particularly those dependent on regular income and access to reliable transportation.

The goal of this project is to develop and implement a Healthy Neighborhood Store Program, to encourage existing neighborhood stores to improve the food retail environment, increase access to healthy food for families, increase the ability for families to make healthy food purchases in their neighborhood, improve dietary habits, and address food insecurity for families disproportionally impacted by the pandemic. The program will target Small Food Retailers in Qualified Census Tracts (QCTs) and USDA FARA LI/LA access areas. The program aims to build relationships with store owners and asks them to make gradual changes to sell and promote healthy foods with support and training.

According to the US Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Healthy Corner Stores have the power to positively impact the health of community members by providing greater access to healthy foods, such as fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables, whole grain snack items, and low-fat dairy products. Encouraging and supporting corner stores to stock and sell healthier food and beverage items has become an important goal of many public health stakeholders.

There is moderate evidence to support this evidenced-based community health intervention. This project intends to strengthen and support neighborhood features that promote health, safety, and access and respond to the negative impacts of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Citation: Access to Healthy Food Stores Modifies Effect of a Dietary Intervention

> Nicole M. Wedick, MS, ScD, Yunsheng Ma, PhD, Barbara C. Olendzki, RD, MPH, Sherry L. Pagoto, PhD, Thomas G. Land, PhD, Wenjun Li, PhD, Published: October 06, 2014 Clinical Trial Registration Number: NCT00911885
>
> https://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797(14)00487-5/fulltext

Citation: Rose D, Richards R. Food store access and household fruit and vegetable use among participants in the US Food Stamp Program. Public Health Nutrition. 2004;7(08)

> Food store access and household fruit and vegetable use among participants in the US Food Stamp Program - PubMed (nih.gov)

Citation: A Cheadle 1, B M Psaty, S Curry, E Wagner, P Diehr, T Koepsell, A Kristal PMID: 2057471 DOI: 10.1016/0091-7435(91)90024-x Community-level comparisons between the grocery store environment and individual dietary practices Prev Med. 1991 Mar;20(2):250-61.

https://www.aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/2021-09/low-income-covid-19-impacts.pdf

Performance Report

There are no mandatory reporting requirements under the expenditure category 2.22.

Key performance indicators of the project include the following goals to be met by the end of 2024:

- Develop a Healthy Neighborhood Store technical assistance program: 1
    - Complete: SPFC created an onboarding process that includes an MOU for the stores to sign, assists each store with infrastructure needs, offers technical assistance for stores to receive SNAP/EBT payments and assists stores with implementing procurement and marketing practices.
- Enroll small food-retailers located within QCTs and LI/LA areas: 6

  Complete: Since the writing of the 2024 report, SPFC continued their FRESH Pace program at six stores in USDA-designated low-income, low-access areas. While some stores stopped complying with program requirements and were removed from the program despite efforts by SPFC to support them through the identified issues, SPFC onboarded new stores to fill those vacancies in the program. The 6 stores actively launched at this time are:

    - Rajax Meat and Food Mart - 2327 Dr. MLK Jr. St. S.
    - Lakeview Market - 1940 22nd Ave. S.
    - Yara Food Mart - 1311 22nd St. S.
    - Midtown Supermarket - 1856 18th Ave. S.
    - Three Brothers Market – 1040 16th St. S.
    - Taste of the Islands Marketplace – 2255 34th St. S.
- In partnership with the city create a "Certified Healthy Neighborhood Store Program": 1
    - Complete: Stores become part of a network of certified Healthy Neighborhood Stores participating in the FRESH Pace Program by submitting a program application and agreeing to follow all program terms and conditions outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Stores in network undergo performance monitoring and receive technical assistance from the subrecipient.
- Sub-recipient will assist stores in procuring and stocking healthy food products: 6
    - Complete: SPFC assists stores in ordering food to sell as part of the FRESH Pace program and provides technical assistance so stores can maintain that practice sustainably in the future. SPFC also assisted stores in creating a FRESH Pace "point of sale button" to assist with purchasing and stocking food products, and the related reporting back to SPFC. SPFC is continuing this work utilizing new funding after the ARPA-funded pilot has ended.
- Sub-recipient will assist stores in registering as a SNAP/WIC retailer: as applicable
    - Complete: During this pilot, 1 store needed and has been assisted in this manner. With the help of the SPFC team, Lakeview Market got approved to accept SNAP payments from customers.
- Sub-recipient will create a community engagement model: 1
    - Complete: SPFC created a communications plan that included various community engagement tactics such as store owner and customer surveys, store special events, print and digital informational materials, and nutrition handouts to promote newly stocked products in the stores.
- Sub-recipient will create a sustainable model for annual enrollment: 1

- Complete: The Sub-recipient created a Grant Application for annual store enrollment, a standard program MOU, Store Owner and Customer Survey's, and replicable program and promotional materials.

Although the program's main intent was to increase access to affordable, healthy foods, the project scope additionally included a health education component. Throughout the project performance period, SPFC held three health screening events on Saturdays at participating FRESH Pace stores. Customers were offered blood pressure and blood glucose checks by SPFC Health Center staff, as well as information on SPFC's Health Center services. SPFC's Health Center provides comprehensive primary and specialty care services to adults who are uninsured and 300% or below the federal poverty line. At one of the Health Check events, a FRESH Pace customer named Michael was screened and connected to lifesaving medical care.

Michael was exiting the bus when SPFC's Health Center team was setting up for the Health Screening event. After shopping at the store, Michael walked over and was greeted by SPFC's Registered Nurse (RN), who asked if he would like to participate in the Health Check event. He agreed, and when his Blood Pressure and Blood Sugar were checked, it was high and out of normal range. Michael reported that he had "not been feeling well" but that he was planning to wait until he was covered by Medicare at 65 to go to a doctor since he was 64. SPFC's RN and M.D. provided some health education and a flier to call SPFC Health Center. Michael called the health center within the next week and was scheduled to see our Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN). Michael received lab work, and his A1C was 11.7. A normal range for A1C is under 5.7. Michael was connected to SPFC's Prescription Health Program, where he was placed on a Patient Assistance Program to receive metformin, insulin, and cholesterol medication. With primary care and prescription support, Michael's A1C went down to 6.0. Furthermore, Michael was connected to our Healthy Living Coach (HLC) to receive diabetes education and coaching. Michael has now been meeting with the HLC every other week. The HLC reports that the patient has learned the importance of lifestyle changes to support his health. Michael now avoids all processed foods and prepares his own healthy meals daily, a change that was successfully maintained in meeting significant food challenges during the holidays. Through support from the APRN and HLC, Michael knows how to monitor his blood glucose and does so daily. Michael told SPFC that he wants to take care of his health to be able to be there for his grandchildren but shared, "I just didn't know where to start."

Project 19542: Healthy Food Action Plan

Funding amount: $544,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.22 Strong Healthy Communities: Neighborhood Features that Promote Health and Safety

Project Overview

Additionally in the food security space, the City has allocated $544,000 to develop and implement a **Healthy Food Action Plan**. The Healthy Food Action Plan is a community planning project that intends to address the social, environmental, economic, and physical aspects of food access and food security within the Healthy Food Priority Areas of St. Petersburg. The goal of the Healthy Food Action Plan is to increase health outcomes by developing food access projects. The mission is to connect residents to resources through partnerships and guide future food and health policy.

The Healthy Food Action Plan focuses on 16 census tracts designated by the City as Healthy Food

Priority Areas. These census tracts have limited access to a variety of food retail options, with transportation and income barriers being of particular concern within the Healthy Food Priority Areas. The Healthy Food Action Plan utilizes the U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service tool, Food Access Research Atlas, to identify which areas of St. Pete are considered Healthy Food Priority Areas. Each community identified has a 20% or greater prevalence of poverty and a significant or majority number of residents without access to a healthy food retailer within .5 miles, considering walkability and no vehicle access.

The Healthy Food Action Plan timeline runs from July 2023 through December 2025 and will be implemented in four phases:

1. **Discover: Assessments and Data Collection** - *July 2023 - October 2023*
2. **Envision: Community Planning and Engagement** - *November 2023 - February 2024*
3. **Design: Action Plan Development and Community Reporting** - *March 2024 - July 2024*
4. **Deliver: Grantmaking and Implementation -** *July 2024 - December 2025*

A portion of ARPA funds ($240,000) for this project cover the personnel costs for the Planner II hired to implement this project internally, as well as the cost of hiring part-time Neighborhood Food Advocates to assist in the community engagement and surveying portion of collecting resident input to inform the plan. All administrative costs were obligated and reported to the Treasury as required – see Project 19544-1: Administrative Costs Post 12/31/2024 in the Project Inventory below for details.

The remainder of the funds ($304,000) are allocated to the Community Food Grant Program. Informed by the Healthy Food Action Plan, the Community Food Grant Program aims to improve health outcomes for all residents in St. Petersburg by funding local non-profit agencies that will implement projects that align with the Healthy Food Action Plan (HFAP) Areas of Focus and strategies. The Community Food Grant Program seeks to empower local stakeholders to develop innovative solutions and create a more inclusive and resilient food landscape for all residents.

The City set aside up to $300,000 in grants, in tiers of $10,000, $25,000, and $50,000, to area nonprofit organizations that submitted projects aligning with one or more of the Healthy Food Action Plan's areas of focus that include supporting local food economy and community building, improving food access and security, and strengthening community health and wellness. Projects are implemented under a performance period of January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025.

Use of Evidence

The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionally impacted lower-income families, including those living in low income/low access areas (LI/LA) as designated by the US Department of Agriculture Food Access Research Atlas (USDA FARA), widening existing gaps. According to the HHS, nationwide, low-wage workers lost jobs at nearly five times the rate of middle-wage workers and nearly half of lower-income families report that they or someone in their household had lost a job or taken a pay cut as the result of the pandemic. The losses in reliable income as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated long-standing disparities in access to healthy food for many families, particularly those dependent on regular income and access to reliable transportation.

The goal of this project is to develop and implement a Healthy Food Action Plan is improve community food security and access, address gaps in the food system, examine and improve public policy affecting the food system, increase community participation in shaping the food system, increase the sustainability and resiliency of the community food system. M.W. Hamm and A.C. Bellows defines community food security as follows, “Community food security exists when all citizens can obtain a safe, personally acceptable, nutritious diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes healthy choices, community self-reliance and equal access for everyone.”   According to the USDA, more than 34 million people, including 9 million children, in the United States are food insecure. The pandemic has increased food insecurity among families with children, who already faced hunger at much higher rates before the pandemic.

The American Planning Association (APA), its Chapters and Divisions, and planners support a comprehensive food planning process at the community and regional levels. In the APA Policy Guide on Community and Regional Food Planning, it outlines the multiple and complex links among food system activities and between food and planning activities such as land use, transportation, and economic development planning. Community concerns about health, economic development, and ecological sustainability are also intricately linked to food system issues and to each other. Achieving community-food objectives requires collaboration between groups representing varied interests such as anti-hunger, nutrition, farming, and environmental issues; span separate government agencies; and include multiple levels of government in dialogues. For these reasons it is imperative that St. Petersburg initiate a community-driven healthy food action planning process.

There is moderate evidence to support this evidenced-based food systems planning intervention. This project intends to conduct this critical analysis of information to guide and inform decisions on complex, public health issues, involve stakeholders to ensure shared ownership of the process and results to ultimately promote health, safety, and access and respond to the negative impacts of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

The total dollar amount of $544,000 will be allocated towards this evidence-based intervention for the project term.

Performance Report

The Healthy Food Action Plan is a community initiative aimed at addressing the social, environmental, economic, and physical factors affecting food access and security in the Healthy Food Priority Areas of St. Petersburg. The plan seeks to improve health outcomes by developing food access projects and connecting residents to resources through partnerships, ultimately shaping future food and health policies. Healthy St. Pete implemented the HFAP using an Asset-Based Community Development approach. Various strategies were employed to gather community input, including Community Surveys, Community Food Forums, and Community Reviews. Through this process, the community formulated a St. Petersburg Food Vision statement, identifying three key focus areas: Supporting Local Food Economy & Community Building, Improving Food Access & Security, and Strengthening Community Health & Wellness. The plan also highlighted community ideas and practices as strategies to advance its goal of improving health outcomes within the city. The final phase of the HFAP entails connecting the creation and implementation of a Community Food Grant Program. The Community Food Grant Program is a competitive grant program that aims improve health outcomes for all residents in St. Petersburg by funding local non-profit agencies who will implement projects that align with the Healthy Food Action Plan (HFAP) Areas of Focus and strategies. The selected grantees will be required to submit data that aligns with their funded work to monitor impact and outcomes.

The Healthy Food Action Plan has been completed and is available for review on the City’s website:

https://www.stpete.org/Government/city_initiatives/American%20Rescue/Healthy%20Food%20Action%20Plan%20Booklet_2024_v15.pdf

The Community Food Grant Program was launched in the summer of 2024. Through a grant review committee, 9 organizations were selected to receive funds through this program. All agreements were executed in December 2024, ahead of the obligation deadline. The grant performance period began on January 1, 2025. See summary below of selected non-profits and their impact areas funded under this grant:

- $10,000 tier:
    - **The Kind Mouse** – alleviating childhood hunger
    - **Good Neighbors** – increasing food access for seniors with mobile food delivery and pop-up pantries
    - **Daystar Life Center** – promoting gardening and nutrition education, providing fresh produce to prevent chronic disease
- $25,000 tier:
    - **15th Street Farm** – providing local produce, prepared meals, and urban agriculture resources to low-income participants of partner organizations
- $50,000 tier:
    - **First United Methodist Church** – food pantries in 4 elementary schools within Healthy Food Priority Areas in the city ($45,000 awarded)
    - **360Eats** – CommUnity Kitchen providing prepared meals in a food truck choice model at Sanderlin Center, using upcycled ingredients
    - **Evara Health** – Food Rx program, providing food insecure clinic patients with $50 vouchers for fruit and vegetables to build and maintain medically appropriate diets for chronic disease remediation
    - **Reach St. Pete** – free mobile grocery store bus, a mobile choice food pantry with a focus on fresh ingredients and educational resources
    - **St. Pete Free Clinic** – 119,000 meals-worth of food support for their no-cost grocery store and FRESH pantry

Project 19072: Summer Food Program

<u>Funding amount</u>: $100,000

<u>Project Expenditure Category</u>: 2.1 Household Assistance: Food Programs

<u>Project Overview</u>

To provide services to disproportionately impacted children in our recreation centers (childcare facilities), refrigeration units will be purchased, and supplemental food expenditures will be used to increase access to healthy food for children. The refrigeration units enable recreation centers (childcare facilities) to store non-shelf stable foods safely and offer supplemental nutritional snacks and meals promoting a healthy childhood environment.

The project supported the Summer Food program over three years (summer of 2022, 2023, and 2024).

Use of Evidence

The goal of this project is to use the ARPA funds to improve the capacity of City sponsored sites to implement the USDA Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), and to increase quality and quantity of food delivered to youth at recreation centers. Utilization of summer feeding programs, particularly SFSP, has drastically increased, this can be contributed to rising food needs during, and as a continuing effect from, the COVID-19 pandemic. Food service programs have become an essential component of the nationwide nutrition safety net, allowing millions of children to continue receiving vital nutrition. This project will ensure children in the community receive access to food during out-of-school time. This project is intended to enhance the USDA Summer Food Service Program, to ensure that the nutritional needs of vulnerable children are met in order to avoid exacerbating gaps in health outcomes.

The total project spending that is allocated towards this evidence-based intervention is $100,000.

Citations:

Soldavini J, Franckle RL, Dunn C, Turner L, Fleischhacker S. Strengthening the Impact of USDA's Child Nutrition Summer Feeding Programs During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic. Durham, NC: Healthy Eating Research; 2021. Available at: http://healthyeatingresearch.org.

Dunn CG, Kenney E, Fleischhacker SE, Bleich SN. Feeding low-income children during the Covid-19 pandemic. N. Engl. J. Med. 2020;382(18):e40. doi:10.1056/NEJMp2005638.

Performance Report

Below are the key performance indicators for this project (combined totals from summers 2022 and 2023):

a. Number of children served by childcare and early learning (pre-school/pre-K/ages 3): **6100**
b. Number of households served (by program if recipient establishes multiple separate household assistance programs): **6900**

Project 19102: Coordinated Social Services: Community Support Hubs & Shared Services Organization

Funding amount: $8,580,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.37 Economic Impact Assistance: Other

Project Overview

The pandemic has increased prior concerns about mental health in our communities as economic anxiety, feelings of loneliness and depressive disorders continue to rise. Neighborhood-based intervention services are a key element to addressing barriers to access that communities can experience when in crisis. The increased stigma to mental health and social services coupled with barriers to accessing these services increase negative outcomes in the social determinants of health. Neighborhood-based, trauma-informed wraparound services meet individuals in an environment where they are comfortable, provide relief quickly, and provides appropriate care and support by local organizations who are known and trusted by neighborhood residents.

Through a competitive solicitation process, the City identified Pinellas Community Foundation as the subrecipient for $8.58M of the ARPA funds to establish a network of coordinated, neighborhood-based, trauma-informed Community Support Hubs (Hubs) and establish an administrative support/shared services organization (SSO) to build capacity in local nonprofits through December 2026. The Request for Proposals to identify and select the subrecipient was released in July 2022, with responses due in August 2022. Pinellas Community Foundation was selected as the subrecipient, and this appropriation was approved by City Council on November 3, 2022.

The Hubs will be located in neighborhoods that have suffered disproportionate impacts from the pandemic. The Hubs will provide trauma-informed counseling, care management, and assertive outreach as the core services available at each Hub. Each Hub will have the flexibility to add services that are responsive to community need. The Hubs will also have direct access to emergency funding to address crisis needs and stabilize the household. Services provided at the Hubs will be from local, trusted nonprofit organizations already knowledgeable of and embedded in the targeted communities.

Since the writing of the 2024 report, the collaborative partnership for St. Petersburg's Community Support Hubs completed the transition from pilot phase to implementation phase, with Gulf Coast JFCS leading the current phase of project implementation and People Empowering & Restoring Communities (PERC) as a collaborative partner. Essential to the concept of the Hubs is ensuring that residents receive the services they need in the ways that they need them. Using lessons learned through project start-up and using resident choice as a driving force, partners evaluated space and service needs and made adjustments to best serve the community as they moved into the implementation phase of the project.

The intention is to have two full-scale Hub locations by the end of 2026, with a sustainability plan in place to continue to serve residents in those locations and scale operations as needed. Hub designs may be diversified by location need and may include a combination of physical locations and/or co-located branches using space of existing community providers. Some service needs may be accomplished through the use of a mobile element of service, to increase accessibility for residents. The Hubs are intended to fill gaps in services, ease access to care, and demonstrate improvement in the lives of those served. As such, the model may change to meet emerging needs of the community, as determined by data and with approval by the City. All Hubs opened will be driven by community input and data to ensure maximum resident accessibility to the core services identified above.

The Shared Services Organization (SSO) is a model that provides nonprofit organizational capacity services to small and grassroots nonprofits. The SSO will establish a network of vendors to provide various vital administrative services for local community nonprofits to build their capacity and better prepare for funding opportunities to further their impact in our community. Nonprofit organizations that serve residents in St. Pete will be eligible to apply for these free capacity-building and support services, based on organization capacity level and need, including:

- Program design and planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation
- Financial management including accounting, payroll, and other finance activities
- Grant writing
- Communications and marketing
- Technology, including general IT for the organization and staff, database creation for metrics, project management, and operations
- Legal and other operational and administrative support
- Leadership training for staff and board, including professional development

- Organizational strategic planning, assessment, and development
- Training resources

Pinellas Community Foundation created a competitive solicitation process to establish the Shared Services Organization project. The SSO will be administered by The Hypatia Collaborative, a local shared services organization that acts as the administrative hub and umbrella organization for the network of nonprofit consultants and vendors. Hypatia's agreement with Pinellas Community Foundation commenced on February 1, 2024, and extends through 2026.

Hypatia launched their application for non-profit organizations to receive services in May 2024. The first 18-month cohort, comprised of ten (10) non-profit organizations, launched on July 1, 2024. Since the writing of the 2024 report, Hypatia has recruited and onboarded a total of 68 non-profit organizations that serve city residents, which are spread over seven (7) total cohorts. Each cohort receives services and support over 18 months, systematically working through their client services plan and making progress towards the strategic vision determined at the beginning of the process for each organization. Hypatia's project model includes evaluation of SSO services and their impact on the client organizations, the first findings of which will be available for Cohort 1 at the end of 2025.

Use of Evidence

Community Support Hubs:

There has been a recognition of the importance of providing access to trauma-informed professionals who can respond in real time emergency challenges facing residents. Neighborhood based intervention services are a key element to addressing barriers to access that communities can experience when in crisis. The increased stigma to mental health and social services coupled with barriers to accessing these services increase negative outcomes in the social determinants of health. Neighborhood based, trauma informed wraparound services meet individuals in an environment where they are comfortable, provides relief quickly, and provides appropriate care and support by local organizations who are known and trusted by neighborhood residents.
This program design is largely based on the Trauma Recovery Centers model – linked here.

It is intended that these Hubs demonstrate improvement in the lives of those served (program evaluation) and improve the neighborhood metrics in the social determinants of health (community impact). Pinellas Community Foundation has contracted with Reed Community Consulting to conduct the evaluation for the Community Support Hubs piece of the project.

This is a developmental evaluation that looks at the following research questions: What are the successes? How does the core team approach knowledge management? What challenges do partners face? What are the challenges for the project? What lessons are being learned about mental health, navigation services, and community impacts? What common principles, if any, undergird and inform the work of Hub partners, funders, hub lead? How are current trends affecting current and future provision of Hub services and community impacts? Additional research questions will be developed with the Hub Community Liaisons board, now that it has been convened.

The overarching project goals are to: improve the lives of those served, alleviate crisis situations, stabilize individuals and families, and improve health and safety of neighborhoods. To evaluate progress towards those goals, the evaluation plan includes measuring changes in population and performance metrics as a result of the outlined strategies. This includes looking at changes in crime statistics in the adjacent area, change in calls for mental health emergencies, number of residents navigated successfully be service type, reduction of stigma to accessing care for mental health, changes in perceived access to care, distributions of various health indicators, improvement in those with mental health treatment plan goals. This evaluation will include a control group who do not receive Hub services to compare against residents who do receive services.

Shared Services Organization:
Hypatia Collaborative, the organization administering the SSO project, reports the following approach in their evaluation plan of the SSO:
"The evaluation of the Shared Services Organization (SSO) initiative managed by the Hypatia Collaborative aims to assess its effectiveness in enhancing the operational capacity and sustainability of nonprofits led by historically excluded populations in the St. Petersburg area. Through a comprehensive mixed-methods approach, we will evaluate the SSO's impact on client organizations, focusing on capacity building, program efficacy, and professional development opportunities. Key components of the evaluation include measuring client satisfaction and experience through surveys and interviews, analyzing quantitative data such as financial performance metrics and organizational benchmarks, and gathering qualitative insights from various stakeholders within the community. Working in collaboration with the Ethics and Selection Committee, we will ensure that the evaluation process centers on community voices, nonprofit concerns,… The evaluation outcomes will inform ongoing improvements, guide future decision-making, and contribute to the overall success and sustainability of the SSO initiative."

The core evaluation questions are:

- To what extent has the Shared Services Organization (SSO) supported the enhancement of administrative, operational, and programmatic capacities within nonprofit organizations in the St. Petersburg area?
- How have the findings from the SSO evaluation influenced the overall nonprofit ecosystem in St. Petersburg?
- How have the findings from the evaluation been leveraged in decision-making with potential funders?

Methods include surveys, interviews, focus groups, and measuring change in organizations' iCAT assessment, Needs Assessment, and operating budget.

Performance Report

Through the pilot start-up phase of the **Community Support Hubs** project, the transition of lead nonprofit, and now into the implementation phase, there continue to be ongoing discussions about outcomes and outputs that will be reported to measure success of this project. Below are some high-level outcomes that the project aims to achieve through 2026, as well as a summary of client service data to date.

The Hub aims to improve community well-being by:

- Improving the lives of those served (demonstrated through improved individual mental health outcomes, reduced stigma accessing mental health care, increased service utilization, and increased perceived access to care)
- Alleviating crisis situations (demonstrated through response numbers and disposition of the situation)
- Stabilizing individuals and families (demonstrated through number of residents served by service type)

- Improving health and safety of neighborhoods (demonstrated through improved community-wide mental health outcomes and crime statistics near Hub location(s)).

Since the start of robust data collection for this program, the following client service data has been collected:

- Clients enrolled and served to date: **265 residents**
    - Total inquiries received to date: 710
    - Ineligible contacts, who received warm hand-offs to other supportive services to meet their identified needs: 73
    - Individuals who discontinued contact after initial contact: 71
- Clients have presented with a variety of needs, the majority falling under the categories of Mental Health, Housing, Financial, and Employment.
- The Hub has established a robust provider network of mental health clinicians to serve Hub clients:
    - Number of providers in the provider network: **40 providers, with a capacity to serve 141 clients at a given time**
    - Total clients who have received mental health services via the provider network: **77 clients**
    - Total number of individual mental health services provided to enrolled clients: **462 services**
        - 328 therapy sessions
        - 68 assessments
        - 61 treatment plans
        - 4 psychiatric evaluations
        - 1 group session *[since tracking of this metric began]*
    - 81% of clients attend their scheduled appointments. The no-show rate is 19%, which is lower than the national average.
- **$85,180.79** in emergency client incidentals through May 2025, covering a variety of needs such as overdue rent to prevent evictions, utility arrears to prevent water or electricity shut-offs, child safety measures such as locks, and public transportation assistance to ensure clients can get to work or essential appointments.

The **Shared Services Organization** will similarly provide higher level evaluation outcomes from the project, as well as monthly and quarterly outputs that help measure project success. The SSO aims to improve the nonprofit ecosystem in St. Petersburg by:

- Increasing administrative, operational, and programmatic capacity for nonprofits (demonstrated through improved scores on the Impact Capacity Assessment Tool and qualitative data gathered through interviews with non-profits)
- Enhancing non-profit sustainability (changes in operating budget, changes in types and allocations of grants awarded)

See summary below of applications received to date and total numbers in each cohort:

- Total applications received: 93 non-profits
    - Of these 93 applications, **a total of 68 non-profit organizations** have been determined eligible and placed in a cohort to receive services over 18 months.
- Cohort 1 is comprised of 9 organizations:
    - $128,180.00 is budgeted for SSO services across those 9 orgs, informed by the needs assessments and client service plans that identified service areas for each organization.
- Cohort 2 is comprised of 7 organizations:
    - $111,315.00 is budgeted for SSO services across those 7 orgs
- Cohort 3 re-launched November 1st after the hurricanes caused operational effects for the SSO and all cohort members. Cohort 3 now has 12 organizations:
    - $158,665.00 is budgeted for SSO services across those 12 orgs
- Cohort 4 is comprised of 7 organizations:
    - $106,405.00 is budgeted for SSO services across those 7 orgs
- Cohort 5 is comprised of 9 organizations:
    - $160,200.00 is budgeted for SSO services across those 9 orgs
- Cohort 6 is comprised of 12 organizations:
    - $263,520.00 is budgeted for SSO services across those 12 orgs
- Cohort 7 is the final cohort that will be launched, and is comprised of 12 organizations:
    - $245,910.00 is budgeted for SSO services across those 12 orgs

Evaluation data from the first few cohorts will be available in the 2026 report, once those cohorts finish their 18-month term of services and complete post-service evaluation activities.

Project 20233: Youth Opportunity Grants

Funding amount: $946,365

Project Expenditure Category: 2.37 – Economic Impact Assistance: Other

Project Overview:

The Youth Opportunity Grants program is a monthly cash disbursement program that provides $500 a month for 12 months to at least 88 young adults who are former foster youth and are not engaged in formal aftercare services through the child welfare system. Direct services such as counseling, case management, parenting programs, and life skills development are available for program participants to meet their needs and assist in maintaining stability during their transition into adulthood.

Ready for Life, Inc., a local non-profit organization that serves former foster youth, was selected to administer this program through a competitive solicitation process. The 2-year agreement with Ready for Life was executed on June 6, 2024. After working on program start-up planning, and then a delay from Hurricanes Helene and Milton, Cohort 1 launched in December 2024, comprised of 28 participants. Cohort 2 launched in April 2025, comprised of an additional 28 participants. Cohort 3 applications are open at the time of writing this report, and will officially launch in September 2025. Depending on total eligible applications received for Cohort 3, it is possible that a fourth cohort will come online to reach the minimum 88 total participants served throughout the program. Each cohort will last 12 months, and all cohorts will conclude prior to the ARPA expenditure deadline at the end of 2026.

Use of Evidence

Participants served will be young adults aged 18-27, who are former foster youth, and have a strong tie to St. Pete (live, work, or attend school within city limits. Participants served will fall under several of the Treasury's definitions of impacted households and communities: including low- or moderate-income, experiencing unemployment, experiencing food or housing insecurity, and households that qualify for CHIP/CCDF/Medicaid.

The goal of this project is to have an upstream impact on a population that faces many barriers in their transition to adulthood, because of their experience in the child welfare system. While there are formal after care services for young adults who age out of traditional foster care once they turn 18, many do not choose to enroll or do not stay enrolled long-term. More than 23,000 youth age out every year in the US. The Annie E. Casey Foundation found that only about one-quarter of 18-year-olds remain in foster care until their 19th birthdays. Additionally, there are youth who were removed from their homes and placed with relatives or guardians and not technically in traditional foster care. Although these young adults face similar outcomes as their counterparts who aged out of traditional foster care, many are ineligible for the same after care services. As a result, many of these young adults have limited skills or family support needed for a successful transition to adulthood. These young adults often have little to no resources, lack trust in any system that may seek to help them, and are carrying the weight and burden of their trauma along the way. This population faces well-documented poor outcomes, including high rates of experiencing homelessness, incarceration, human trafficking, significant mental health issues, and substance dependence.

An underlying factor in these poor outcomes for former foster youth is economic insecurity, a component of which is income volatility – the degree to which one's income fluctuates up and down over a period of time. One tool that has been tested in other cities across the country to help reduce income volatility are programs that give financial assistance directly to program participants with no strings attached.

These disbursement programs provide an economic floor to the participants, they do not cover the participants' entire monthly expenses. One example is the SEED program in Stockton, California, which provided $500 a month for 24 months to participants. SEED's research showed that the intervention "reduced income volatility, or the month-to-month income fluctuations that households face; unconditional cash enabled residents to find full-time employment; recipients were healthier, showing less depression and anxiety and enhanced wellbeing; and the intervention alleviated financial scarcity creating new opportunities for self-determination, choice, goal-setting, and risk-taking" (SEED, Preliminary Analysis: SEED's first year).

The use of ARPA funds for this Youth Opportunity Grants project is intended to create a positive, upstream impact in the lives of former child welfare transition-aged youth who need and deserve an investment in their future to give them a chance to become who they are, with fewer barriers along the way as they gain a foothold in their future.

The total dollar amount allocated towards this evidence-based intervention, which also includes an additional evaluation component, is $946,365.

Performance Report

There are no required performance indicators for this expenditure category.

Ready for Life will report how many participants are served in each cohort, what types of services participants engage in and how that impacted their lives, and how many dollars were provided via the monthly cash disbursements.

Ready for Life, Inc. has also entered into an agreement with the University of South Florida to complete the evaluation for the program. This will include a developmental evaluation of the program implementation, as well as an evaluation of the intervention and how it impacted program participants. USF will review aggregate data from the pre-paid cards to analyze how participants spent their funds. USF will also conduct surveys and focus group interviews to assess how this program impacts participants and if the intervention reduced income volatility in the group. At the time of writing this 2024 report, USF is finalizing the formative evaluation report to share initial observations of Cohort 1 surveys, focus groups, and emerging themes. Initial findings will ensure the project continues to iterate and improve as it goes.

The core evaluation questions are outlined as follows:

- Process
    - P1) Has Ready for Life met its intention to implement the proposed Youth Opportunity Grants (YOG) program?
    - P2a) Have program participants been recruited and enrolled in services per the anticipated numbers of overall program participants? P2b) Is there a plan in place to address challenges to recruitment? P2c) Is there a plan in place to address attrition from services?
    - P3a) Is Ready for Life developing relevant practices, policies, and procedures for YOG programming? P3b) Do these efforts lend themselves to program replicability?
    - P4a) Do program participants have access to mental health interventions and services? P4b) Are referrals routinely discussed and facilitated by Ready for Life personnel working directly with transition-age youth?
- Outcomes
    - O1) Has Ready for Life met its intention to reduce income volatility among program participants?
    - O2) Have program participants seen improvements in well-being and goal attainment throughout the course of their participation in the Youth Opportunity Grants program?
    - O3a) Do program participants report improvements in household economic goals? O3b) A capacity for managing finances to reduce income volatility?
    - O4a) Have program participants who elect to participate in complementary mental and behavioral health services seen a reduction in mental health symptoms? O4b) Improvements in mental health symptoms management?

As of the writing of this report, Ready for Life launched Cohort 1 in December 2024 and Cohort 2 in April

2025. Cohort 3 will launch in September 2025 and those numbers will be included on the next annual report.

- Number of participants onboarded to date: **56**
- Number of monthly cash disbursement units (1 unit = 1 participant receiving 1 $500 payment) given to date: **280 (=$140,000 disbursed total)**
- Number of baseline evaluation surveys conducted to date: **46 à 82% participation rate to date**
- Number of participants receiving additional services: P**articipants in Cohort 1 and 2 have received additional services in this last quarter (April – June 2025), including:**
    - 17 participants attended 27 instances of RFL programming, such as the WingMen group, Mommy & Me group, holiday gatherings, and Fun Friday.
    - 11 participants are taking advantage of RFL's longer term programming as well, including Opportunity Passport (which provides matching funds in a savings account) and the Parent Aide program (which provides wraparound support and peer mentorship to parenting clients).
    - 5 participants have worked with RFL to access Social Action Grant funding that RFL was awarded by the County, which provides limited assistance for essential needs such as housing costs.
    - 9 participants have engaged in 21 individual counseling sessions with Ready for Life's licensed clinician.
    - 12 participants attended a session to go over their finances and get assistance with budgeting, benefits, and overall coaching related to the YOG program specifically.
    - 91 instances where participants requested assistance from RFL to utilize several on-site resources for laundry, food pantry, clothing closet, baby items, hygiene closet, showers, lockers, etc.
    - 49 instances where 13 participants received other assistance from RFL, including assistance with FEMA application, job coaching, navigating the DMV process to register a vehicle, accessing computers on-site to apply for jobs, assistance with housing, assistance with resume writing and job coaching, and overall life stability.
        - On top of these coaching sessions, 18 service referrals were provided to connect participants to services such as ELC, RClub, Foster to Foster, Rainbow Village, Kimberly House, housing supports and shelters, household items from Suncoast Voices, etc.
    - This is in addition to participants engaging with RFL staff on program-specific questions, such as asking questions about the FamZoo card where the money is stored, completing surveys, etc.

Project 21016: Housing Disaster Assistance Program

Funding amount: $160,000

Project Expenditure Category: 8.7 – Other Immediate Needs: Home Repairs for Uninhabitable Primary Residences

Project Overview

The Housing Disaster Assistance Program is funded by $160,000 that was reallocated from the Housing Administrative Expenses project listed above. As the City explored options for where to reallocate those funds ahead of the obligation deadline, Hurricanes Helene and Milton hit the state of Florida and left devastating impacts across St. Pete. In the 2023 Interim Final Rule, the U.S. Treasury expanded allowable uses for ARPA SLFRF funds to include disaster-relief related activities. As such, the City determined that the $160,000 from the Housing Administrative Expenses project would instead contribute to the City's Housing Disaster Assistance Program. Adding more funds to the Housing Disaster Assistance Program pool, which is also funded by other sources including SHIP dollars, would allow the City to directly serve more residents who need this essential financial assistance in the aftermath of the hurricanes.

These funds are used by the internal Housing and Community Development Department to fund resident recovery activities requested through a public application process. Since there is no external vendor or subrecipient agreement for this project, the City has documented the obligation of these funds via an Interagency Agreement between Housing & Neighborhood Services Administration and the Housing and Community Development Department, fully executed on December 16, 2024.

Use of Evidence

The City determined that the following conditions are present, and therefore this program falls under an eligible use category for ARPA SLFRF funding:

1. Treasury-required condition 1: "Identify a natural disaster that has occurred or is expected to occur imminently, or a natural disaster that is threatened to occur in the future."
    a. Hurricane Helene (DR-4828-FL) and Hurricane Milton (DR-4834-FL) are two natural disasters that occurred in the fall of 2024 – both of which received the required emergency declarations.
2. Treasury-required condition 2: "Identify emergency relief that responds to the physical or negative economic impacts, or potential physical or negative economic impacts, of the natural disaster. The emergency relief must be related and reasonably proportional to the impact identified."
    a. Emergency relief is needed for City residents as a result of both of the above-named disasters, both from a physical damage standpoint, due to negative economic impacts of lost homes, lost belongings, lost businesses and employment, displacement, etc.

While the Disaster Assistance Program as a whole provides support for a variety of needs, ARPA funds will only be used to fund activities allowable per the 2023 Interim Final Rule. This may include rental assistance when residents were displaced and need help paying for temporary housing or debris removal (such as trees), but primarily will be used to cover home repairs not covered by insurance for primary residences in order to make the residence habitable again. All Duplication of Benefits requirements will be upheld.

Performance Report

This program launched for City residents in March 2025. Program staff are first utilizing funding sources with expenditure deadlines that come before ARPA expenditure deadlines, and as such, have not yet expended any ARPA dollars for this program. In next year's 2026 report, the City will be able to report on program impact specifically as it relates to ARPA-funded activities under this project.

Project 00001: Revenue Replacement Allowance

Funding amount: $10,000,000

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Provision of Government Services

Project Overview

The City elected to take the standard allowance of $10M that a local government can claim as "lost revenue" under the Final Rule. The $10M was transferred to the City's General Fund to reimburse the City for government services expenditures that occurred during FY21, specifically under the award eligibility period of March 3, 2021, to September 30, 2021. Governmental service expenditures include public labor and services costs (police and fire departments) and other general fund governmental services to support the general public like parks and recreation, libraries and general support services. This transfer of funding then freed up $10M in the General Fund to be used for additional affordable housing projects. $6.5M went to the Deuces Housing and Community Development Project and $3.5M to the Affordable Housing Gap Financing Project with a focus on producing new rental units that would be affordable for households with incomes at or below 80% AMI.

Use of Evidence

N/A

Performance Report

N/A

Project 19544-1: Administrative Costs Post 12/31/2024

Funding amount: $470,861.98
[Note: these costs are already reflected above in each project budget, therefore do not add to the total SLFRF funding received by the City. This figure represents the amount obligated to internal administrative costs ahead of the 12/31/2024 deadline, covering 2025 and 2026 personnel needs.]

Project Expenditure Category: 7.1 - Administrative Expenses

Project Overview

This project outlines the City's obligated administrative expenses to cover the period after the obligation deadline of 12/31/2024. This funding covers:

(1) Continuation of the ARPA Impact Monitor Project for personnel costs ($226,990) to be incurred after 12/31/2024 related to subrecipient monitoring, reviewing and correcting invoices, reporting and compliance requirements and other legal and administrative needs for the Case Management and Wraparound Services Project, Scattered Family Shelter Sites Project, Youth Opportunity Grants Program and Coordinated Social Services. Personnel also perform on-site assessments and review metrics.

(2) Continuation of the personnel costs ($93,887) related to the Healthy Food Action Plan Project for the Food Systems Planner. The Food Systems Planner is required to implement the final phase of the Healthy Food Action Plan, subrecipient monitoring, reviewing and correcting invoices, and related

reporting and compliance requirements.

(3) Continued personnel costs ($149,985) in the ARPA Housing Administration Project, related to housing related projects in existing housing positions. The housing development positions are required to oversee housing related projects, subrecipient monitoring, reviewing and correcting invoices, and related reporting and compliance requirements.

All administrative costs post-2024, including methodology used to estimate these costs, were obligated and reported to the Treasury by the required deadlines.

Use of Evidence

This project will not be used for evidence-based interventions, the goal is to support programs as outlined above.

Performance Report

There are no mandatory reporting measures for this project as it is administrative in nature.