

Westchester County, New York **Recovery Plan Performance Report**

State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds 2024 Performance Report Update

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2024 Recovery Plan Update Performance Report**

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
Westchester County Profile	3
COVID-19 Impacts Summary	6
Uses of Funds.....	8
Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities	9
Revenue Replacement (EC 6).....	10
Public Healthcare	10
Negative Economic Impacts.....	12
Affordable Housing	15
Housing Disparities	15
Water, Sewer, and Broadband Infrastructure	17
Promoting Equitable Outcomes	17
Community Engagement.....	18
Labor Practices.....	19
Use of Evidence	19
Evaluation.....	19
Table of Expenses by Expenditure Category	20
Project Inventory	23
Ineligible Activities: Tax Offset	23

Executive Summary

Through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, Westchester County has obligated \$187,926,698, of which it has expended \$165,323,405 to address the impact of COVID-19 on the most vulnerable populations across the county. Westchester County has made strategic investments to reduce disparities in public health, increase access to quality housing, expand workforce development and training, and create economic opportunity. Focused attention has been given to Qualified Census Tracts (QCTs) and other communities, households and businesses disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. This report focuses on Westchester County ARPA activities between March 3, 2021 and June 30, 2024.

- \$90MM in the Affordable Housing Investment Fund, which will support the development of more than 1,000 affordable housing units.
- \$3MM has been obligated to support the rehabilitation of more than 120 existing affordable housing units in disrepair or required ADA modifications, of which \$1.1MM has been deployed as of June 30, 2024.
- Westchester County's Business First program provided \$13.8MM in grants to nonprofit organizations, religious institutions, minority and women owned business, and service-disabled veteran owned small businesses delivering frontline services during the height of COVID-19 recovery.
- Westchester County has expended \$5.7MM to strengthen healthcare delivery to medically underserved populations through investments in Federally Qualified Health Centers, senior telemedicine infrastructure, maternal mortality, and smoking cessation. An additional \$3.25MM has been obligated.
- To assist local economies recover, \$1.16MM has been deployed of a total \$5.5MM obligated for downtown revitalization, workforce development and training, and tourism/hospitality product development and marketing.
- \$13.3MM to support wages for front line workers and other COVID-19 related expenses.
- \$38.2MM on improvements to and the operation of critical wastewater and refuse infrastructure. An additional \$11MM has been obligated.
- \$1.4MM to ensure food pantries throughout the county were stocked and those in need could access services.
- \$250,000 has been obligated, of which \$37,500 has been expended to support child development and the resilience of county's young people.

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was signed into Law on March 1, 2021, appropriating \$363 billion to the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recover fund (Recovery Fund). Westchester County was allocated \$187,926,698 under this fund. The County has until December 31, 2024, to obligate the funds and until December 31, 2026, to expend the funds with all work performed and completed.

There are five primary categories that governments may invest the funds in (1) support the public health response, (2) address negative economic impacts, (3) replace public sector revenue loss, (4) premium pay for essential workers and (5) water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure. Funds may cover costs from March 3, 2021, through December 31, 2024.

Westchester County Profile

Westchester County is an area in the Hudson Valley north of New York City with cultural, economic, social, and geographic diversity. The County contains densely populated urban centers, suburban development catering to commuters, and rural farmland, creating a unique sense of place. As one of the most affluent counties in the United States, Westchester County’s economic diversity is often overlooked as there are low socioeconomic status neighborhoods across the county. A summary profile of Westchester County follows:

FIGURE 1: WESTCHESTER COUNTY, NY

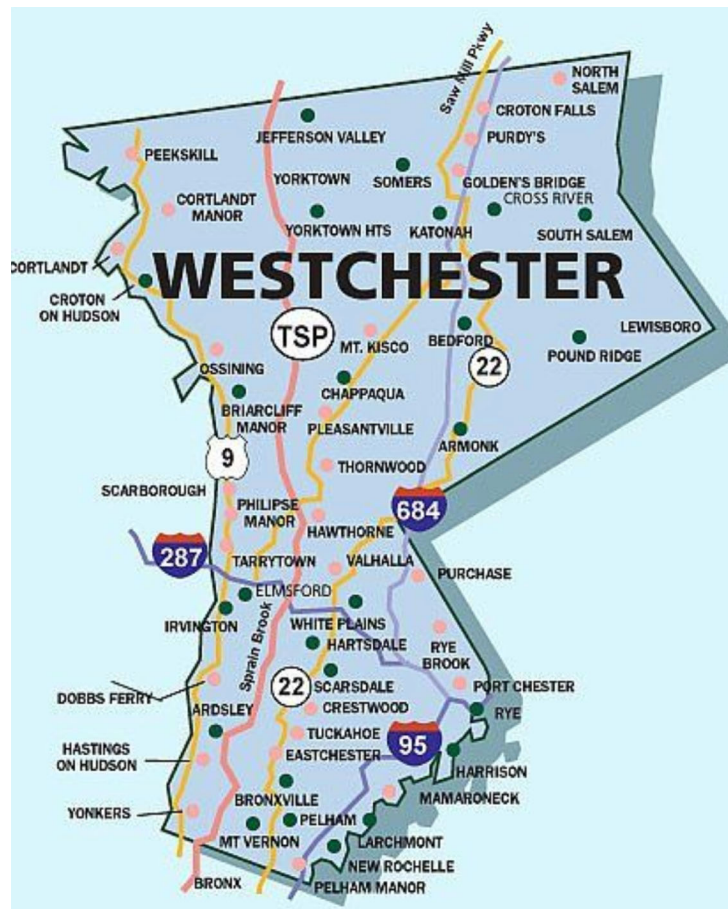


TABLE 1: WESTCHESTER COUNTY, NY - DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS¹

	Westchester County 2020	United States
Total Population (2020)	1,004,457	331,449,281
Race/Hispanic Origin (2020)		
White	52.4%	59.3%
Black	16.7%	13.6%
Asian	6.6%	6.1%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1.0%	1.3%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.3%

¹ Source: U.S. Census, 2016-2021, except as noted

	Westchester County 2020	United States
Two or more races	2.7%	2.9%
Hispanic/Latino	25.9%	18.9%
<i>Foreign-born</i>	25.4%	13.5%
<i>Age</i>		
≤ 18	21.4%	22.2%
≥ 65	17.8%	16.8%
<i>Housing</i>		
Housing units (July 1, 2021)	392,186	142,153,010
Owner-occupied housing unit rate	61.4%	64.4%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units	\$544,100	\$229,800
Median gross rent	\$1,599	\$1,096
Building permits (2021)	2,319	1,736,982
Homeless Individuals, Q4 2022 ²	1,406	N/A
<i>Computer/Internet Use</i>		
Households with a computer	93.1%	91.9%
Households with a broadband Internet subscription	88.4%	85.2%
<i>Education</i>		
High School graduate or higher, percent of persons aged 25 years+	88.6%	88.5%
Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons aged 25 years+	49.7%	32.9%
<i>Health</i>		
With a disability, under age 65 years	5.8%	8.7%
Persons without health insurance, under age 65 years	5.7%	10.2%
<i>Economy</i>		
In civilian labor force, total, percent of population age 16 years+	65.2%	63.0%
Total accommodation and food services sales, 2017 (\$1,000)	2,561,634	938,237,077
Total health care and social assistance receipts/revenue, 2017 (\$1,000)	10,819,866	2,527,903,275
Total retail sales, 2017 (\$1,000)	16,295,562	4,949,601,481
Total retail sales per capita, 2017	\$16,799	\$15,224
<i>Income/Poverty</i>		
Median Household Income	\$99,489	\$64,994
Per capita income past 12 months	\$57,953	\$35,384
≤ 100% Federal Poverty Level (FPL)	7.6%	11.4%

Westchester County, New York has a land area of 430.50 square miles. Its estimated population is 1,004,457 (U.S. Census, 2020). The racial mix of the population is more diverse than the U.S. (see Table 1). The portion of the population under 18 and over 65 is like the U.S. (21.4% as compared to 22.2% and 17.8% as compared to 16.8% respectively). The percentage of Hispanic/Latino residents is markedly higher than the U.S. (25.9% as compared to 18.9%). The

² Source: Westchester County Continuum of Care Partnership to End Homelessness website, July 2023

percentage of foreign-born residents in Westchester County is also markedly higher (25.4% as compared to 13.5%).

As of July 1, 2022, there were 392,186 housing units in Westchester County of which 61.4% were owner-occupied (like the U.S. rate of 64%). The median value of owner-occupied housing units was \$544,100, more than double the U.S. value of \$229,800. Median gross rent in Westchester County is \$1,599, higher than the U.S. figure of \$1,096. In a County-wide survey, residents (26.5%) selected “affordable housing” as the second most important action to improve community health (after “mental health services”)³. Unhoused individuals in December 2022 were 1,345, 0.14% of the total County population.

Households with a computer (93.1%) and with broadband internet subscription (88.4%) in Westchester County are slightly higher than the U.S. (91.9% and 85.2%, respectively), however there are census tracts where broadband affordability is an issue.

The percentage of Westchester County residents who are high school graduates or higher is very similar to the U.S. rate (88.6% and 88.5% respectively) though the percentage of residents with a bachelor’s degree or higher is notably higher (49.7% and 32.9% respectively).

Rates of disability and persons under the age of 65 lacking health insurance are lower in Westchester County than the U.S. (5.8% and 8.7%; and 5.7% and 10.2% respectively).

A higher percentage of Westchester County residents are in the civilian labor force than the U.S. (65.2% as compared to 63.0% respectively). Total retail sales per capita are higher than the U.S. (\$16,799 as compared to \$15,224).

Median household income and per capita income in Westchester County (\$99,489 and \$61,830 respectively) are higher than the U.S. (\$57,953 and \$35,384 respectively). About 7.6% of County residents are at or below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level, lower than the U.S. rate (11.4%).

Although Westchester County is affluent overall, there are pockets of poverty. Qualified Census Tracts (QCT) “are those in which 50% or more of the households are income eligible and the population of all census tracts that satisfy this criterion does not exceed 20% of the total population of the respective area,” (Department of Housing and Urban Development, no date). The QCT in Westchester County that are targeted for ARPA funding include substantial portions of the municipalities of Yonkers and Mount Vernon, as well as areas in New Rochelle, Port Chester, White Plains, Sleepy Hollow, and Peekskill.

TABLE 2: WESTCHESTER COUNTY QCT (CENSUS, 2020)

QCT	Total Population	Median Household Income	% at or below 100% Federal Poverty Level (FPL)	% Renters
Yonkers QCT: 1.01, 1.03, 2.01, 3.00, 4.01, 4.02, 5.00, 6.00, 10.00,	69,453	\$37,290	28.9%	86.5%

³ Westchester County Community Health Assessment 2019-2021.

QCT	Total Population	Median Household Income	% at or below 100% Federal Poverty Level (FPL)	% Renters
11.01, 11.02, 12.00, 13.02, and 13.03				
Mount Vernon QCT: 27.00, 29.00, 31.00, and 35.00	8,684	\$33,627	20.9%	82%
New Rochelle QCT: 62.00 and 63.00	5,428	\$48,208	17.5%	71%
Port Chester QCT: 80.00	5,217	\$53,750	24.3%	86%
White Plains QCT: 93.00	2,968	\$31,775	30.8%	73%
Sleepy Hollow QCT: 116.00	6,779	\$47,242	19.4%	83%
Peekskill QCT: 142.00 and 143.00	3,984	\$34,794	25.1%	88%

COVID-19 Impacts Summary

Over the past 3.5 years, the Westchester County’s COVID-19 response has been robust, mobilizing critical resources and leveraging strategic partnerships with the private and nonprofit sectors in the county to address public health, economic, and social impacts of the pandemic. The County has been on the front lines of COVID mitigation and response since the very onset of the pandemic in early 2020. “An attorney who lives in Westchester County and works in midtown Manhattan is New York state's second confirmed coronavirus case — and the first apparent instance of community spread” (4 New York, March 3, 2020). As of March 22, 2023, there have been a total of 336,628 COVID cases in Westchester County. Total deaths are 3,394.

Even prior to any State or Federal assistance becoming available, the County utilized its own resources to quarantine infected individuals, setup testing sites, and promote awareness about the dangers of the virus. Once Federal assistance became available through the Families First and CARES Acts, the County was able to continue and greatly enhance its COVID mitigation and response activities. The County dedicated \$225.5 million in federal resources, including 100 percent of its Coronavirus Relief Fund allocation, to COVID mitigation and response activities during 2020. This much needed assistance stabilized the County from both a public health and economic perspective. With this aid, the County was able to provide a litany of programs, aid, and virus mitigation measures including:

- Grants to small businesses struggling with revenue losses
- Remote learning centers for school-aged children without high-speed internet access at home and whose parents are essential workers
- Conduct of safe elections
- Transition a portion of County workforce to teleworking to mitigate virus transmission while ensuring continued service delivery
- Food insecurity assistance and distribution

- Rental assistance
- Provision of PPE to both County employees and the public at-large
- Quarantining infected individuals
- Partnering with the State to provide drive-thru testing sites
- Enhanced mental health outreach services
- Redesign and enhanced cleaning of County facilities to improve virus mitigation and protect the public who enter
- Open Parks and other outdoor recreation facilities by ensuring social distancing protocols
- Continued employment of mass and air transportation workers for the County bus system and airport

Once vaccines became available in early 2021, the County transitioned its primary pandemic response from containment and mitigation to vaccine distribution. The County provided and staffed the County Center facility to be a NYS DOH regional mass vaccination site for the Hudson Valley, and the County opened its own vaccination site at the Westchester Community College Field House for County residents and workers. Additionally, the County purchased deep freezers to accommodate vaccine storage for eventual distribution to pharmacies and other healthcare providers for their use and engaged in a public awareness campaign promoting the benefits of vaccination. As of December 7, 2022, 86.54% of Westchester County’s population is fully vaccinated, of which over 80,000 vaccines were administered by the Westchester County Health Department.

The community impacts of COVID-19 are significant but difficult to comprehensively quantify.

An April 2020 survey of Westchester County businesses (N=700) “clearly showed that the Westchester business community was struggling...” according to Westchester County Executive George Latimer. Key findings were:

- “58% said that they would lose 75-100% of their revenue because of COVID. However, 56% said they had not let anyone go as of the date of the survey.
- More than half of the businesses in the survey were from retail, personal services, administrative and professional services. 60% were either solo Entrepreneurs or businesses with less than five employees.
- 85% reported needing financial assistance with 64% reported applying for SBA loans, of which 39% needed help with the application process.
- 29% of respondents reported annual gross revenue over \$1,000,000 and 25% reported under \$100,000. Small businesses represent a broad spectrum.
- 65% of respondents have been in business for more than 10 years so they are part of the fabric of Westchester County.
- 70% of respondents needed help addressing or changing business models or marketing to help keep customers/clients. They were concerned with immediate situation with regards to cash flow, rent, paying employees, and trying to figure out if and how to continue after COVID.”

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact WC hotel and event properties, complicating our path to recovery. The County’s position as business and overnight destination weighed heavily with the loss of over 1,300 hotel rooms permanently, a 20% decline in hotel inventory. Permanent closures include the Doral Arrowwood, Hilton Westchester, Renaissance Westchester and LaQuinta in Armonk.

Hotel accommodation taxes declined from \$6,502,899 in 2019 to \$3,340,139 in 2020. Unlike County sales tax receipts, these do not appear to be rebounding. A report from the Westchester County Association Post Pandemic Working Group (September 2020) stated “COVID-19 poses an unprecedented challenge to the stability of Westchester’s regional economy. Our businesses have been shuttered, our healthcare system is strained, our nonprofits and educational institutions are stressed, and our public budgets are stretched thin.” The Association proposed a “multisector approach to economic recovery” with four foundational pillars: (1) Healthcare and Bioscience, (2) Real Estate and Housing, (3) Digital Connectivity, and (4) Energy and Sustainability.

Uses of Funds

With the passing of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) in March 2021, federal assistance was extended to counties across the country to help recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Westchester County effectively managed the disruption of the pandemic and minimized the financial hardship on the county. Recognizing the spirit intended for ARPA funds, Westchester County outlined an investment strategy focused on the county’s most vulnerable. The strategy addressed issues of equity, affordability, and access, which established a foundation for resilience and growth.

In designing Westchester County’s ARPA investment strategy, County leadership emphasized the transformative nature of these funds, targeting investment to advance equity, breaking down barriers that have resulted in disparities in public health, access to quality, affordable housing, education attainment, and economic opportunity. The intention behind Westchester County’s ARPA investment is to:

- Strengthen the role of public health and improve the health of vulnerable populations
- Reimagine economic opportunity
- Build capacity of nonprofit organizations that serve the county’s most vulnerable
- Develop affordable housing opportunities for residents

Overarching Goal – Over a four-year period, Westchester County, through targeted investment of ARPA funds, will decrease disparities experienced in health, access to quality, affordable housing, education attainment, and economic opportunity by addressing market and structural challenges experienced by diverse populations across the county.

With the impacts of COVID-19 very real, ARPA investment in 2021 and 2022 were directed towards immediate recovery, assisting individuals and organizations working on the front line of the pandemic. In 2023, focus shifted towards making investments in activities that address long-term recovery for critical populations still impacted and resiliency that will have lasting impact on the lives of many consider “essential” during the pandemic. ARPA investments made

during this reporting period centered on a broader vision for Westchester County that supports prosperity by:

- Expanding access to affordable housing
- Creating greater access and improving the quality of healthcare
- Strengthening the county’s downtowns
- Attracting visitors to enjoy the rich experiences unique to the county
- Increasing workforce development and job training opportunities; and
- Advancing efforts towards food security for low- and moderate-income individuals.

The following provides an overview of the ARPA investment and demonstrates the commitment by Westchester County leadership to decreasing disparities by addressing market and structural challenges experienced by diverse populations across the county.

Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities

The ARPA outlines certain services that are eligible when provided to residents and business located in a Qualified Census Tract (QCT) or to other households, businesses or populations disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. In considering public health, economic impacts, community investment, and affordable housing, Westchester County has made a conscious effort to positively impact residents and businesses located in QCTs, as well as families with children with special needs.

Qualified Census Tracts

QCT neighborhoods face disproportionate impact given low-median household income, limited economic investment, and greater health disparities. Research increasingly has provided evidence that secure, affordable housing constitutes one of the basic and powerful social determinants of health (World Health Organization 2018). Investing ARPA funds to expand access to quality affordable housing is central to COVID-19 recovery and improving the quality of life for residents of QCT neighborhoods.

Children with Special Needs

Families with children with special needs face additional challenges, which were compounded by COVID-19. During the pandemic access to programs for children with special needs were disrupted, which had a profound effect on child development. Westchester County operates the Children with Special Needs Bureau (CSN) to assist these children and their families. CSN is comprised of these programs:

1. NY State Early Intervention Program (EIP) - a comprehensive program for eligible children from birth to three years of age who have a disability or a developmental delay
2. Preschool Special Education Program (PSEP) - serves preschool children ages three to five that have been determined to be eligible for preschool special education programs and or related services, such as speech therapy, occupational therapy and physical therapy through their local School District Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE)

3. Children with Special Health Care Needs Program (CSHCN) - provides information, referral and advocacy for families of children who are physically challenged or chronically ill, birth through 21 years of age.

Working with the CSN, an emphasis was placed on increasing access to services for families with children with special needs. For a number of areas outlined below, greater coordination with CSN ensured that families with children with special needs accessed ARPA programs and services, which included early intervention, special education programs, and access to affordable and/or ADA accessible housing.

Revenue Replacement (EC 6)

Westchester County has allocated all ARPA funds to Revenue Replacement (EC 6). In the first two quarters of 2024, Westchester County expended \$42,486,538 to Revenue Replacement, totaling \$165,323,405 to date. Below outlines the specific uses of ARPA funds.

Public Healthcare

Federally Qualified Health Center Capital Grant (\$7,394,598 ARPA Allocated Funds; \$4,265,084 Expended through June 30, 2024)

Westchester County has 11 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) providing primary and preventative health services to medically underserved communities across the county. To modernize health centers, expand services, and improve the quality of medical care, Westchester County established an FQHC capital grant program with \$7,394,598 in ARPA funds, of which \$4,265,084 has been expended. Grants allow FQHCs to expand or renovate facilities and purchase imaging and diagnostic equipment to expand and improve delivery of care.

Maternal Mortality Program (\$1,000,000 ARPA Allocated Funds; \$546,175 Expended through June 30, 2024)

Westchester County launched the Black Maternal Child Health Initiative (BMCHI) with a \$1M investment in ARPA funds. The BMCHI, an initiative of the Westchester County Health Department, was developed with the goal of improving Black maternal and child health outcomes, reducing racial health disparities, and creating lasting partnerships between key community partners who are focused on ensuring successful birthing practices for all in Westchester County. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Black women are three times more likely to die from a pregnancy-related cause than White women. County Executive George Latimer said: “The Black Maternal Child Health Initiative is a three-pronged approach to address something we all know is a problem. It is on us to deepen the conversation about Black maternal health in Westchester County. Through this Program, we will introduce new policies, strengthen our research and analysis, and execute long-term care solutions to ensure health equity across our County.”

Westchester County Health Department has partnered with organizations such as the Lower Hudson Valley Perinatal Network, St. John’s Riverside Hospital, Birth from The Earth, Sister to Sister, International and other advocates and providers to value Black women and their children

and ensure maternal mortality is reduced. **Westchester County Commissioner of Health Sherlita Amler, MD**, said: “Focusing on health equity and improving health outcomes for all mothers is a very important goal for the Health Department, but especially for Black mothers and babies who are disproportionately affected by economic and racial inequities. We are thrilled to launch this partnership to work together to reduce disparities and to educate, inform and increase healthcare access for County residents as they strive to achieve improved health for themselves and their families.”

The BMCHI is another example of Westchester County shifting from recovering to establishing a long-term strategic approach to addressing serious public health concerns. COVID-19 contributed to 25% of maternal deaths in 2020 and 2021. Learning from that experience and investing in systems change is key to the BMCHI. **Sister to Sister, International Founder Cheryl Brannan** said: “We appreciate our partnership with County Executive Latimer and Commissioner Amler at the WCDOH. Funding our community partners will assist in pushing our collective training, education, policy and systems change agenda forward. Systemic change requires that government collaborates with stakeholders that are close to the problem and allocate the necessary resources.”

Senior Telehealth (\$1,000,000 ARPA Allocated Funds; \$707,310 Expended through June 30, 2024)

Westchester Public/Private Membership Fund for Aging Services, Inc., a public/private partnership dedicated to providing myriad services to help seniors age with independence, was allocated \$1,000,000 in ARPA funds, of which \$707,310 has been expended to deliver telehealth services to elderly persons aged 60 years or older residing in Westchester County. Seniors were one of the most vulnerable populations during the pandemic and telehealth played an essential role in minimizing exposure to the virus. The senior telehealth program supported by ARPA funds enables seniors to self-manage chronic conditions, while avoiding emergency medical visits and reducing costs to the healthcare system.

Westchester Tobacco Free – Smoking Cessation (\$2,000,000 ARPA Allocated Funds; \$208,658 Expended through June 30, 2024)

Westchester County has allocated \$2,000,000 in ARPA funds to implement a robust public education campaign to all residents, highlighting the dangers of tobacco usage, offering efforts to help smokers quit smoking, and to support local community efforts to reduce smoking. As of June 30, 2024, \$208,658 has been expended. Westchester Tobacco Free will include a new direct grant program to community-based non-profits directly involved in tobacco-cessation as part of their anti-addiction efforts, and particularly those groups like local NAACP branches who have advocated for efforts to reduce smoking in communities of color.

The Program will be crafted with the assistance and oversight of members of the Board of Legislators to ensure the County is reaching all smokers, regardless of their geographic or demographic status. This effort will involve the county’s Health Department, Community Mental Health Department, Youth Board and other related departments and offices of Westchester County Government to ensure its success.

Science has made it perfectly clear over the last 60 years that smoking is a dangerous and potentially fatal habit. With that at the forefront, Westchester County Executive George Latimer has launched the Westchester Tobacco Free Program, a two-prong approach to lowering the smoking rate in the County. Latimer said: “Addiction to nicotine products has cut short numerous lives to lung disease, heart disease and related illnesses; has robbed otherwise healthy individuals of their good health; has robbed families of fathers, mothers, siblings and other loved ones prematurely. That is why we are tackling the issue head on with Westchester Tobacco Free, a robust education and enforcement Program.”

Negative Economic Impacts

Downtown Improvement Grant (DIG) (\$1,697,333 ARPA Allocated Funds; \$222,080 Expended through June 30, 2024)

Westchester County introduces the Downtown Improvement Grant (DIG), a grant program to stimulate revitalization of downtown communities funded with \$1,697,333 in ARPA funds, of which \$222,080 have been deployed. JGSC Group, a leading consultancy specializing in building vibrant commercial districts and revitalizing downtowns, assisted Westchester County Office of Economic Development in designing the DIG pilot program to provide select municipalities with economic development support that will stimulate revitalization of their downtown communities. The five communities chosen as inaugural DIG grantees – Bedford, Dobbs Ferry, Mount Kisco, Pelham and Port Chester.

Downtowns in Westchester County provide a sense of place and a focal point to build community. Prior to the pandemic, downtowns were reinventing their role in the economic landscape, COVID-19 disrupted that progress, resulting in high vacancy rates and a decline in foot traffic. As economies move beyond recovery, downtowns have great opportunity to strengthen community by exploring new approaches to economic development. Westchester County Executive George Latimer said: “The unique public-private approach and forward-thinking support that each of these communities will receive is what makes the DIG Program so unique and important as we continue our next phase of long-term economic development strategy. Bedford, Dobbs Ferry, Mount Kisco, Pelham and Port Chester are vital parts of our community that I am proud to support through this innovative stimulation of their local economies that will leave them even more vibrant and self-reliant.”

In early 2023, the County invited communities that do not receive direct CDBG funds nor have received a NY State Downtown Revitalization Initiative in the past to apply for the DIG pilot. Each of the selected communities will receive comprehensive market analysis, a custom-designed strategic economic growth plan, and six-months of hands-on technical support and assistance, and up to \$250,000 support for implementation efforts.

Westchester County worked with JGSC Group and the selected communities to kick-off the grant program. The analysis and strategic planning portion of the grant program continued through the end of 2023. Implementation of the plans began in 2024. "I'm enormously grateful to both the County and the Chamber for their enduring partnership," said Mayor Chance Mullen of the Village of Pelham. "It's a unique and exciting time to be living in our Village, and this is an incredible opportunity for us to capitalize on the work we've been doing to revitalize our

commercial corridor. It won't be long before the buildings we've approved will actually be built. This program will help us crystallize what the next chapter of our work will look like.”

Small Business and Nonprofit Organizations Grants (\$13,838,288 ARPA Allocated and Expended Funds)

Nonprofit organizations are integral to Westchester County’s community fabric. They played an essential role in supporting public health and the recovery from COVID-19. Westchester County deployed \$13,838,288 in ARPA funds to developed a nonprofit grant program to provide general operating support for community organizations that delivered a wide range of services to Westchester County’s most vulnerable and those with the greatest need. The following are the focus areas for the nonprofit grant program.

- Public Health
- Child Development
- Elder Services
- Food Systems/Security
- Workforce Development, Education, and Training
- Nonprofit Capacity Building, Governance, and Volunteerism

The nonprofit grant program focused on nonprofit organizations that reach constituents living in QCT neighborhoods and those disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. Through strategic investment of ARPA funds, greater impact can be realized by:

- Delivering effective, evidence-based programs.
- Achieving greater equity in QCT and other neighborhoods/communities with the high disparities.
- Increasing accountability through program evaluation and data analytics.
- Building organization capacity that reimagines the nonprofit sector, strengthens communities, and transforms lives of individuals and families who face disparities that threaten their health, safety, and welfare.

Westchester County nonprofit organizations mobilized over 35,000 volunteers who helped provide services to people in need throughout Westchester County. To build stronger communities, investment of ARPA fund in nonprofit organizations ensures organization capacity and community resiliency is realized.

Tourism and Hospitality Recovery Action Plan (\$3,000,000 ARPA Allocated Funds; \$938,049 Expended through June 30, 2024)

ARPA funds, coupled with a planning grant from the Economic Development Administration (EDA), supports Westchester County Tourism & Film’s efforts to revive the tourism sector following protracted travel due to the pandemic. The county, with EDA support to develop a Tourism Recovery Action Plan, and a commitment of \$3MM in ARPA funds to implement key initiatives outlined in the plan, positions Westchester County’s tourism sector to experience a strong recovery. As of June 30, 2024, \$938,049 has been expended.

The Westchester County Tourism Recovery Plan takes a comprehensive approach to revitalizing the sector with tourism research, stakeholder engagement, strategic planning, and prioritization of initiatives and projects that will help the tourism sector recover from adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in Westchester. County Executive George Latimer launched the initiative at the Guiding the Future of Tourism forum that was held at Westchester Marriott and attended by tourism partners from hotels, arts and cultural attractions, transportation companies, chambers, and others.

Latimer: “The hospitality and tourism sector has shown remarkable resilience during the past few years. This unprecedented project will guide us to take our economic recovery to a new level, bringing jobs and economic benefits to the entire region. When one attraction succeeds, we all succeed as a destination. We are stronger together.”

Westchester County Tourism & Film has engaged with a team led by Hunden Strategic Partners (Hunden), a full-service, national destination development advisory practice to support the post-pandemic redevelopment and revitalization needs of the region.

Director of Westchester County Tourism & Film Natasha Caputo said: “Westchester County Tourism & Film is excited to work on this comprehensive tourism action plan to help boost tourism, support workforce development, and emphasize diversity and inclusion, benefiting local businesses. I look forward to collaborating to gain sector insights that are essential to the plan’s success.”

The objective of taking a measured approach is to recover and grow the tourism sector for maximum economic benefit in the region. ARPA funds will help encourage new business opportunities to develop in the tourism sector, particularly focusing on new business models and improving the attractiveness of the county as a destination, which will help increase employment opportunities, spur private investment, and advance economic resiliency in the area.

Workforce Development and Job Training (\$783,316 ARPA Allocated Funds; \$520,249 Expended through June 30, 2024)

Ongoing investment in workforce development and job training is a focus of Westchester County, particularly as part of the recovery from COVID-19 pandemic. To support that effort, Westchester County has allocated \$783,316 in ARPA funds for workforce development and training to strengthen the healthcare talent pipeline for underserved populations. As of June 30, 2024, \$520,249 has been expended. The ARPA investment allows the Westchester County Office of Workforce Investment (OWI) to provide comprehensive state-of-the-art workforce development services to both job seekers and employers. ARPA funds have focused on the healthcare and social service sectors. OWI works with the private sector, government and educational institutions, community-based organizations and other agencies associated with the employment and training community to deliver the most extensive workforce development services to the citizens of Westchester County.

Affordable Housing

Post pandemic, there has been incredible pressure on affordable housing. Westchester County recognizes access to affordable housing is one of the most significant challenges facing low- and moderate-income families, particularly those on fixed incomes and those with special needs.

The County Executive and the Board of Legislators are committed to addressing affordable housing and have dedicated \$93MM of ARPA funds to develop new units and rehabilitate existing units. ARPA investment in affordable housing development and rehabilitation, as well as neighborhood revitalization looks to address homelessness, increased inventory of affordable housing units, expansion of housing vouchers, residential counseling, or housing navigations assistance. This investment is focused on the following:

- Development of new units in communities with the greatest disparity.
- Investment in revitalizing QCT neighborhoods and the quality of affordable housing stock.
- Increased access to affordable housing for the elderly and families with children with special needs.
- Rehabilitation of existing units to improve ADA compliance and general housing quality.

Housing Disparities

Affordable housing is a significant issue in Westchester County, which has been magnified since the COVID outbreak. As of May 31, 2024, the median home value in Westchester County in was estimated at \$787,186, a 7.1% increase from May 2023 (Zillow 2024). Westchester County is committed to increasing affordable housing throughout the county, particularly given the increases experienced since COVID. Using ARPA funds, the County has hired a consultant that specializes in affordable housing to assist with increasing the supply of affordable housing. ARPA funds will be further deployed to implement the action plan developed.

Westchester Housing Flex Fund (\$90,000,000 ARPA Allocated and Expended Funds)

Westchester Housing Flex Fund received \$90,000,000 investment in ARPA funds, which will be leveraged for the development of more than 1,000 affordable housing units since COVID-19. The Fund was established to provide low-cost debt and gap financing to scale the production and preservation of affordable housing. One of the program's goals is to increase the inventory of quality affordable housing in those communities in Westchester County where there is limited affordable housing units. A second goal is to increase access to affordable housing for those families that have children with special needs. Flex Fund investment would be dedicated to the development of housing units available to households who are at 65% of the County's area median income.

“Our responsibility as a county government is to make sure that the opportunity for affordable housing is always there. It is our job to make sure that housing is available, that it is fair and accessible to everyone, and that it is at a price point that all people can afford. This is about filling a critical need that people have, and we are helping Westchester's families when we can get them into decent housing that they can afford” said County Executive George Latimer.

The Housing Flex Fund is a new production tool, building on strengths of existing programs and aiming to increase affordable housing units across the county. It is designed for smaller developments with a goal of building at least 900 affordable units.

Small Landlord Rehabilitation Program (\$3,000,000 ARPA Allocated Funds; \$1,076,879 Expended through June 30, 2024)

To improve the quality of existing affordable rental housing stock, \$3,000,000 in ARPA funds were dedicated to establishing the Small Landlord Rehabilitation Program, a funding program for eligible landlords/owners to receive up to \$25,000 per qualified rental unit in properties with up to eight units in a single building. At the drafting of this report \$1,076,879 has been deployed. The program will rehabilitate more than 120 affordable units throughout the county.

The program is designed to provide funding for needed repairs in exchange for maintaining rent increases at affordable levels. Repairs should include correcting any physical condition related to the health or safety and other improvements to prolong the life of the building. Essential improvements may include but is not limited to, replacement of a roof, upgrade of electrical, windows, accessibility ramps, plumbing, and heating systems.

Westchester County Food Pantry Grant Program (\$1,400,000 ARPA Allocated and Expended Funds)

Food systems were tested during COVID-19 and revealed a need to improve access to quality, affordable food. Westchester County Food Pantry Grant Program received \$1,400,000 in ARPA funds to improve the food distribution system in the 64 food pantries across the county. Grant funds can be used to secure inventory, develop infrastructure to support distribution, and renovate the physical plant.

Westchester Children's Museum Family Access Membership Program (\$250,000 ARPA Allocated Funds; \$37,500 Expended through June 30, 2024)

To strengthen resilience among the county's youth, \$250,000 was invested in the Westchester Children's Museum to increase access to low-income families. The Children's Museum provides a vibrant, interactive learning space that fosters curiosity, enhances knowledge, and ignites imagination through creative hands-on exploration for children, families, and school groups. The Children's Museum annually welcomes over 75,000 visitors and offers a diverse range of cultural and STEAM-based programs tailored for children from Pre-K through Middle School.

The Children's Museum strives to be an engaging, inclusive, creative place for play and a catalyst for building our children's confidence and critical thinking skills. ARPA funds help ensure that all children can access the Children's Museum's cultural and educational programs, including those from underserved communities in out-of-school enrichment or those without access to cultural experiences. The Family Access Membership program reduces the annual membership cost from \$250 to \$25 for 1,000 qualified Westchester County families. Eligibility

will be extended to Westchester families enrolled in WIC/SNAP, State Healthcare, and/or those benefiting from free/reduced school lunch programs. Membership includes:

- Unlimited admission to the Museum for six (6) for one full year.
- Member-only opportunities.
- Free parking at the Playland parking lot.
- Association of Children’s Museums reciprocal access to a network of member museums.
- \$100 discount on birthday parties.

As of June 30, 2024, 150 low-income families have taken advantage of the program. During Summer and Fall 2024 the Children’s Museum will work with the County’s Department of Social Services, Health Department, Youth Bureau and other departments to promote and administer the program.

Premium Pay for Front Line Workers (\$8,536,500 ARPA Allocated and Expended Funds)

During the pandemic Westchester County, as did most governments, provided premium pay for front line workers. In 2022 and 2023, \$8,536,500 was expended for premium pay.

Water, Sewer, and Broadband Infrastructure

Wastewater and Refuse District Operations (\$49,217,808 ARPA Allocated Funds; \$38,217,808 Expended through June 30, 2024)

Westchester County has allocated \$49,217,808 in ARPA funds for wastewater and refuse district operations dedicated to service in qualified census tracts. As of June 30, 2024, the County has expended \$38,217,808.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

Westchester County is committed to achieving reliable sustained change across the County that results in greater equity for the diverse population living and working in the County. The programs outlined above are designed to advance equitable outcomes and target ARPA investment in QCT throughout Westchester County. ARPA funds presents an opportunity to address market and structural challenges that have resulted in a range of disparities. The following are goals associated with promoting equitable outcomes.

Goal 1 – Westchester County, through targeted investment of ARPA funds, will decrease disparities experienced in health, home ownership, and economic opportunity by addressing market and structural challenges experienced by diverse populations across the county.

Goal 2 – Westchester County will create affordable, quality rental property and home ownership opportunities for hundreds of essential workers and their families who have been priced out of the County housing market, leading to increased wealth creation, security of tenure, stabilized housing costs, and increased mobility.

Goal 3 – Westchester County will strengthen the regional economy by investing ARPA funding in workforce development, extending access to capital for small business and nonprofit

organizations, facilitating tourism product development, promoting Westchester County offerings, and providing technical assistance and success coaching to small businesses and nonprofit organizations that result in job creation, new business starts, increased occupancy, capital investment, and incentivizing entrepreneurship.

Westchester County has designed a broad reaching community engagement strategy to raise awareness of the opportunities ARPA funding affords diverse populations, particularly those individuals who are essential workers and those living in qualified census tracts. Westchester County will partner with a host of community organizations and social service providers to ensure communities who are traditionally marginalized are aware of the opportunities and assistance will be provided to support their access to ARPA programs and services.

Westchester County has designed its ARPA programs with equity at the center, highly targeted investment, focused outreach to individuals and household living in qualified census tracts and/or experienced disparities and structural barriers to personal and professional growth that have adversely impacted their quality of life. Westchester County, through its evaluate on process and continuous process improvement will track specific performance measures related to issues of equity and will allow the county to make the necessary adjustments to ensure reliable, sustained change is achieved.

A series of performance measures specific to ensuring equity are incorporated in the ARPA evaluation design that will inform the following program outcomes.

- Increased access to economic opportunity for individuals living in qualified census tracts;
- Expanded home ownership and availability of affordable rental housing
- Reduced risk for people with behavior health challenges through integrated crisis intervention led by behavioral health professionals and supported by area police when needed; and
- Improved wastewater treatment that results in improved service and decreased operating costs.

Community Engagement

Westchester County has incorporated and will continue to incorporate substantial community engagement into the planning and delivery of ARPA funding. This community engagement includes a series of public hearings and targeted community meetings with impacted residents of Westchester County. Two public hearings were held during the last reporting period, July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022. Below are the specifics of each public hearing.

- August 24, 2021; New Rochelle City Council Chamber
- September 13, 2021; Mount Kisco Library

The public hearings provided a great opportunity for the community to come together and share the challenges they face in dealing with COVID-19 recovery. At each public hearing there were a minimum of 40 participants representing residents of the county, leaders from nonprofit organizations serving the county, and owners of the county's small businesses provided insight

into the direct impact of living with for over two years and outline their needs to not only effectively recover from COVID-19, but to thrive in the wake of the pandemic. The comments shared at the public hearings helped inform issues of affordable housing, shape the guidelines for the Nonprofit Grant program, and offer guidance as to economic recovery.

Labor Practices

Federal and state labor standards will be followed for all ARPA funds including ensuring that prevailing wages are paid, New York State WICKS Law followed, and Davis Bacon Wage standards are adopted. Additional required labor standards will be incorporated into each investment area as part of the planning process. Compliance with all required labor standards will be assured by Westchester County administration staff.

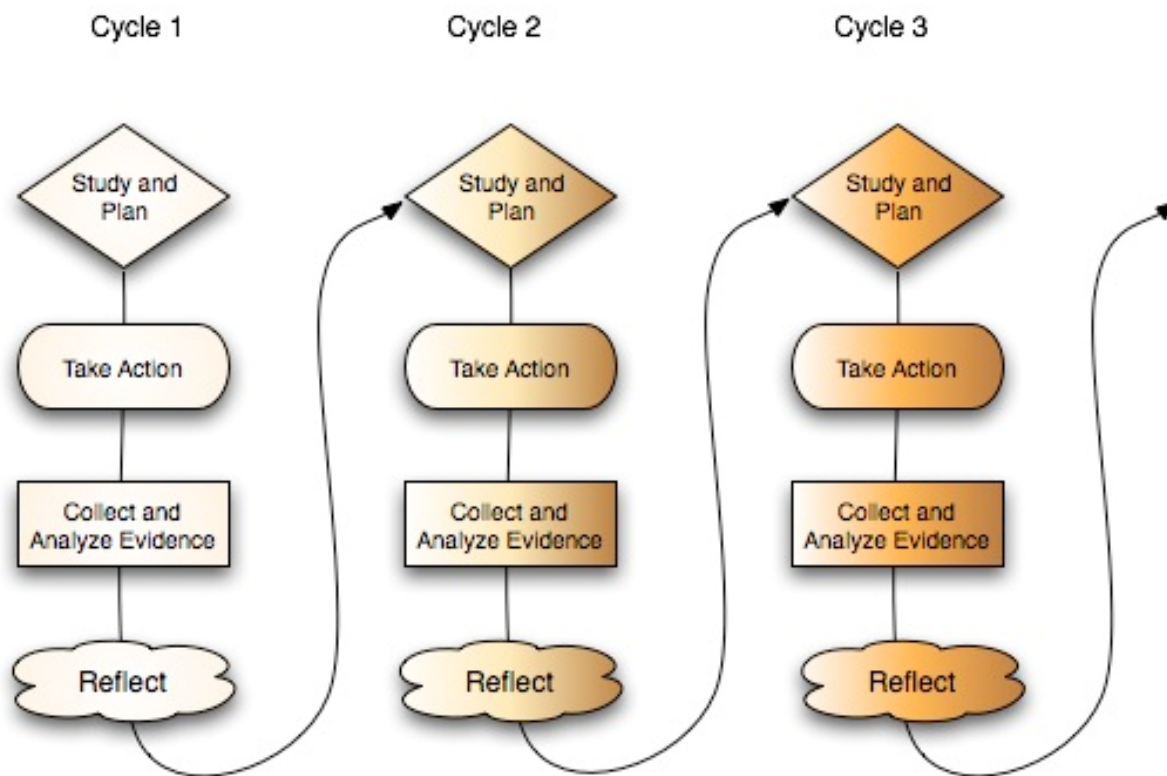
Use of Evidence

Westchester County plans to focus on evidence-based practices (EBT) as appropriate in all programs undertaken with these funds. For example, the proposed behavioral health intervention, mobile crisis teams, is a best practice for Behavioral Health Crisis Care (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2020). A recent meta-analysis of the literature on the impact of mobile crisis teams (University of Cincinnati, Center for Police Research and Policy, 2020) concluded “research generally suggests mobile crisis teams can increase connection to community-based services following a crisis incident, mitigate pressure on the mental health system by reducing unnecessary emergency department visits/hospital admissions, and promote cost effectiveness.” Similarly, Action Research models are widely used in business, healthcare, education, and other arenas. In education alone, Action Research has been the focus of almost 17,000 peer reviewed articles in the last 20 years (Institute of Education Sciences, 2021).

Evaluation

The following outlines the County’s strategy for performance measurement.

Process and Impact Evaluation – Westchester County will engage in both a process evaluation and an impact evaluation. The evaluation will include formative measures that will be the foundation for continuous improvement and summative measures that will evaluate outcomes and impacts at the end of the ARPA reporting period. Organization systems and a series of dashboards will be established to support the evaluation process and provide critical information to Westchester County leadership as to progress towards achieving ARPA goals.



Progressive Problem Solving with Action Research

The evaluation of ARPA performance measures will primarily rely on existing data sources that will be integrated into the action research cycles and disseminated through a series of dashboards. Survey research, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups will augment the program evaluation design to gain more depth, particularly in assessing ARPA investment in public health/MCRT, economic development, and Nonprofit performance measures.

Table of Expenses by Expenditure Category

This section is not applicable, as the County has not recognized ARPA recovery funds as revenue prior to the close of the period covered by this report.

Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
1	Expenditure Category: Public Health		
1.1	COVID-19 Vaccination	-	-
1.2	COVID-19 Testing	-	-
1.3	COVID-19 Contact Tracing	-	-
1.4	Prevention in Congregate Settings (Nursing Homes, Prisons/Jails, Dense Work Sites, Schools, etc.)	-	-
1.5	Personal Protective Equipment	-	-

Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
1.6	Medical Expenses (including Alternative Care Facilities)	-	-
1.7	Capital Investments or Physical Plant Changes to Public Facilities that respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency	-	-
1.8	Other COVID-19 Public Health Expenses (including Communications, Enforcement, Isolation/Quarantine)	-	-
1.9	Payroll Costs for Public Health, Safety, and Other Public Sector Staff Responding to COVID-19	-	-
1.10	Mental Health Services	-	-
1.11	Substance Use Services	-	-
1.12	Other Public Health Services	-	-
2	Expenditure Category: Negative Economic Impacts		
2.1	Household Assistance: Food Programs	-	-
2.2	Household Assistance: Rent, Mortgage, and Utility Aid	-	-
2.3	Household Assistance: Cash Transfers	-	-
2.4	Household Assistance: Internet Access Programs	-	-
2.5	Household Assistance: Eviction Prevention	-	-
2.6	Unemployment Benefits or Cash Assistance to Unemployed Workers	-	-
2.7	Job Training Assistance (e.g., Sectoral job-training, Subsidized Employment, Employment Supports or Incentives)	-	-
2.8	Contributions to UI Trust Funds*	-	-
2.9	Small Business Economic Assistance (General)	-	-
2.10	Aid to nonprofit organizations	-	-
2.11	Aid to Tourism, Travel, or Hospitality	-	-
2.12	Aid to Other Impacted Industries	-	-
2.13	Other Economic Support	-	-
2.14	Rehiring Public Sector Staff	-	-
3	Expenditure Category: Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities		
3.1	Education Assistance: Early Learning	-	-
3.2	Education Assistance: Aid to High-Poverty Districts	-	-
3.3	Education Assistance: Academic Services	-	-
3.4	Education Assistance: Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Services	-	-
3.5	Education Assistance: Other	-	-
3.6	Healthy Childhood Environments: Child Care	-	-
3.7	Healthy Childhood Environments: Home Visiting	-	-
3.8	Healthy Childhood Environments: Services to Foster Youth or Families Involved in Child Welfare System	-	-
3.9	Healthy Childhood Environments: Other	-	-

Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
3.10	Housing Support: Affordable Housing	-	-
3.11	Housing Support: Services for Unhoused persons	-	-
3.12	Housing Support: Other Housing Assistance	-	-
3.13	Social Determinants of Health: Other	-	-
3.14	Social Determinants of Health: Community Health Workers or Benefits Navigators	-	-
3.15	Social Determinants of Health: Lead Remediation	-	-
3.16	Social Determinants of Health: Community Violence Interventions	-	-
4	Expenditure Category: Premium Pay		
4.1	Public Sector Employees	-	-
4.2	Private Sector: Grants to other employers	-	-
5	Expenditure Category: Infrastructure		
5.1	Clean Water: Centralized wastewater treatment	-	-
5.2	Clean Water: Centralized wastewater collection and conveyance	-	-
5.3	Clean Water: Decentralized wastewater	-	-
5.4	Clean Water: Combined sewer overflows	-	-
5.5	Clean Water: Other sewer infrastructure	-	-
5.6	Clean Water: Stormwater	-	-
5.7	Clean Water: Energy conservation	-	-
5.8	Clean Water: Water conservation	-	-
5.9	Clean Water: Nonpoint source	-	-
5.10	Drinking water: Treatment	-	-
5.11	Drinking water: Transmission & distribution	-	-
5.12	Drinking water: Transmission & distribution: lead remediation	-	-
5.13	Drinking water: Source	-	-
5.14	Drinking water: Storage	-	-
5.15	Drinking water: Other water infrastructure	-	-
5.16	Broadband: "Last Mile" projects	-	-
5.17	Broadband: Other projects	-	-
6	Expenditure Category: Revenue Replacement		
6.1	Provision of Government Services	\$165,323,405	\$62,727,474
7	Administrative and Other		
7.1	Administrative Expenses	-	-
7.2	Evaluation and data analysis	-	-
7.3	Transfers to Other Units of Government	-	-
7.4	Transfers to Nonentitlement Units (States and Territories only)	-	-

Project Inventory

This section is not applicable, as the County has not recognized ARPA recovery funds as revenue prior to the close of the period covered by this report. Key performance indicators are being incorporated into management plans for each investment area.

Ineligible Activities: Tax Offset

This section is not applicable, as this provision of the ARPA fiscal recovery funds applies only to States.