

Westchester County, New York
Recovery Plan Performance Report

**State and Local Fiscal Recovery
Funds**

2021 Report

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Executive Summary

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was signed into Law on March 1, 2021. On May 10th, the U.S. Department of Treasury issued the Interim Final Rule (IFR) along with FAQs and a fact sheet which provides guidance on the \$363 billion Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recover fund (Recovery Fund). Westchester County was allocated \$187,926,698 under this fund and received one half of that amount or \$93,963,349 on May 19, 2021. It is anticipated that the County will receive the remaining 50% one year from this date. These funds are accounted for on the balance sheet as deferred revenue and will be recognized as revenue as eligible expenditures are made by the County. 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.

There is broad flexibility to help those disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic. The County must demonstrate that the investment of funds supports the public health response or that the recipients of the funds have experienced economic harm from the pandemic. Additionally, there is greater flexibility for Qualified Census Tracts (QCTs) and other communities, households and businesses disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

While the County has continued COVID mitigation and response efforts into the covered period, the County has not yet recognized recovery fund revenues as of the close of the period covered by this report. The County is awaiting the completion of the community input process before making final allocations to programs and recognizing the associated recovery fund revenues. As such, this report focuses on the planned uses of the funds awarded rather than expenditures to date.

Over the next three years, subject to a transparent public planning process, Westchester County preliminarily plans to allocate funds in the following areas:

- Affordable housing development and eviction prevention;
- Public health;
- Small business and non-profit assistance;
- Infrastructure upgrades, and parks in qualified census tracks (QCT); and
- Grants to build stronger communities.

In considering ARPA investment, Westchester County sees a once in a generation opportunity to transform key county programs and services, build capacity of critical service providers in the county, and address structural challenges that have led to disparities in public health, access to quality housing, education attainment, and economic opportunity.

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

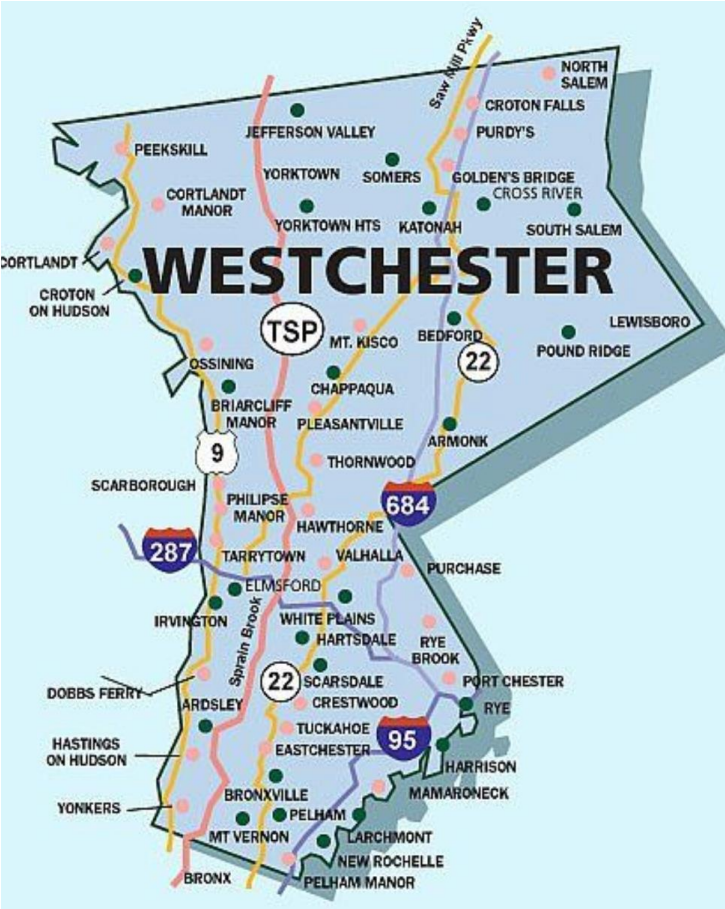


TABLE 1: WESTCHESTER COUNTY, NY - DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS¹

	Westchester County	United States
<i>Total Population (2020)</i>	1,004,457	328,239,523
<i>Race/Hispanic Origin (2020)</i>		
White	49.5%	76.3%
Black	13.0%	13.4%
Asian	6.5%	5.9%
American Indian/Native Alaskan	0.1%	1.3%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	<0.1%	0.2%
Some other race alone	0.9%	0.0%
Two or more races	3.2%	3.0%
Hispanic/Latino	26.8%	18.5%
<i>Foreign-born</i>	25.5%	13.5%
<i>Age</i>		
≤ 18	21.7%	22.3%
≥ 65	17.4%	16.5%
<i>Housing</i>		
Housing units (July 1, 2019)	377,297	139,684,244
Owner-occupied housing unit rate	61.4%	64.0%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units	\$540,600	\$217,500
Median gross rent	\$1,537	\$1,062
Building permits (2020)	2,834	1,471,141
Homeless Individuals, 2019 ²	1,812	N/A
<i>Computer/Internet Use</i>		
Households with a computer	92.0%	90.3%
Households with a broadband Internet subscription	86.2%	82.7%
<i>Education</i>		
High School graduate or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+	88.1%	88.0%
Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+	48.9%	32.1%
<i>Health</i>		
With a disability, under age 65 years	5.7%	8.6%
Persons without health insurance, under age 65 years	5.7%	9.5%
<i>Economy</i>		
In civilian labor force, total, percent of population age 16 years+	65.3%	63.0%

¹ Source: U.S. Census, 2015-2019, except as noted

² Source: Westchester County Continuum of Care Partnership to End Homelessness, Point-in-time Count Data, 2019

	Westchester County	United States
Total accommodation and food services sales, 2012 (\$1,000)	2,020,014	708,138,598
Total health care and social assistance receipts/revenue, 2012 (\$1,000)	9,638,221	2,040,441,203
Total manufacturers' shipments, 2012 (\$1,000)	4,492,932	5,696,729,632
Total retail sales, 2012 (\$1,000)	14,514,240	4,219,821,871
Total retail sales per capita, 2012	\$15,093	\$13,443
<i>Income/Poverty</i>		
Median Household Income	\$96,610	\$62,843
Per capita income past 12 months	\$57,049	\$34,103
≤ 100% Federal Poverty Level (FPL)	8.4%	10.5%

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 similar to the U.S. (21.7% as compared to 22.3% and 17.4% as compared to 16.5% respectively). The percentage of Hispanic/Latino residents is markedly higher than the U.S. (26.8% as compared to 18.5%). The percentage of foreign-born residents in Westchester County is also markedly higher (25.5% as compared to 13.5%).

As of July 1, 2019, there were 377,297 housing units in Westchester County of which 61.4% were owner-occupied (similar to the U.S. rate of 64%). The median value of owner-occupied housing units was \$540,600, more than double the U.S. value of \$217,500. Median gross rent in Westchester County is \$1,537, higher than the U.S. figure of \$1,062. 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. Eighteen hundred and twelve (1,812) individuals were homeless on January 24, 2019, less than 1% of the total County population.

Households with a computer (92.0%) and with broadband internet subscription (90.3%) in Westchester County are slightly higher than the U.S. (86.2% and 82.7%, 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 (88.0% and 88.1% respectively) though the percentage of residents with a bachelor’s degree or higher is notably higher (48.9% and 32.1% respectively).

³ Westchester County Community Health Assessment 2019-2021.

Rates of disability and persons under the age of 65 lacking health insurance are lower in Westchester County than the U.S. (5.7% and 8.6%, and 5.7% and 9.5% respectively).

A higher percentage of Westchester County residents are in the civilian labor force than the U.S. (65.3% as compared to 63.0% respectively). Total retail sales per capita are higher than the U.S. (\$15,093 as compared to \$13,443).

Median household income and per capita income in Westchester County (\$96,610 and \$57,049 respectively) are higher than the U.S. (\$62,843 and \$34,103 respectively). About 8.4% of County residents are at or below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level, lower than the U.S. rate (10.5%).

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	69,453	\$37,290	28.9%	86.5%
Mount Vernon	8,684	\$33,627	20.9%	82%
New Rochelle	5,428	\$48,208	17.5%	71%
Port Chester	5,217	\$53,750	24.3%	86%
White Plains	2,968	\$31,775	30.8%	73%
Sleepy Hollow	6,779	\$47,242	19.4%	83%
Peekskill	3,984	\$34,794	25.1%	88%

COVID-19 Impacts Summary

Over the past 18 months, 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 August 2, 2021, a total of 3,170,566 COVID-19 tests have been administered, with 131,857 positive tests (4.2%). Total deaths are 2,484.

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. These efforts have resulted in 616,712 completed vaccinations in the County as of August 23, 2021.

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 is struggling...” according to Westchester County Executive George Latimer. Key findings were:

- “58% said that they will lose 75-100% of their revenue because of COVID. However, 56% said they have 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% are either solo Entrepreneurs or businesses with less than five employees.

- 85% need financial assistance with 64% applying for SBA loans. 39% need help with the application process.
- 29% of respondents report annual gross revenue over \$1,000,000 and 25% under \$100,000. Small businesses have a broad spectrum.
- 65% have been in business for more than 10 years so they are part of the fabric of Westchester.
- 70% need help addressing or changing business model or marketing to help keep customers/clients. They are concerned with immediate situation with regards to cash flow, rent, paying employees, and trying to figure out if and how to continue after.”

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 “multi-sector 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

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
- Reimagine economic opportunity
- Build capacity of nonprofit organizations that serve the county’s most vulnerable

Overarching Goal – Over a five-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.

Subject to the completion of a transparent and community-wide planning process, Westchester County preliminarily plans to allocate ARPA funds as follows:

Public Health (EC 1)

The broad sub-categories under this heading are (1) treatment and medical health services, (2) enhance behavioral and mental health services, (3) support local health and safety workforce, (4) improving the design and execution of health and public health programs and (5) address disparities in public health outcomes. For addressing disparities in public health, the County recognizes that low-income communities have had a disproportionate impact from COVID-19.

Therefore, Treasury will presume that certain types of services are eligible uses when provided in Qualified Census Tract (QCT), to families and populations living in a QCT, or other households, businesses or populations disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

These services include:

- Community health workers who help residents access health services and resources that address the social determinants of health;
- Mental health teams working with our public safety personnel
- Housing services that support healthy living environments and neighborhoods that are conducive to mental and physical wellness; and
- Evidence-based community violence intervention programs that will prevent violence and mitigate the increase of violence during the pandemic.

Westchester County plans to enhance behavioral health/mental health services. The County has identified police-mental health collaboration, in the form of Mobile Crisis Response Teams (MCRT) (also known as mobile crisis teams), as a priority mental health intervention to be one aspect of its ARPA funded public health response.

In January 2021, the Westchester County Police Reform and Reimagining Task Force released 51 recommendations that represent a blueprint for new policing strategies within Westchester County. These recommendations were created in response to a reform mandate from the County Executive and the Governor of New York State under Executive Order 203: New York State Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative.

One of the recommendations from the Task Force is a focus on responding to the needs of residents with behavioral health challenges. “Principles and values” were established to drive all interventions and services in addressing the needs of individuals who may be experiencing a behavioral health crisis. They include interventions and services that are (1) responsive, (2) responders who are skilled and well trained, (3) supportive “warm hand-off” to services after the initial crisis intervention; (4) trauma-informed services and practices; (5) a response that would be characterized by empathy, compassion, and respect.

On the police side, Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT) are being implemented. Westchester County provides 40 hours of basic CIT training to all law enforcement recruits at the Police Academy as well as more in-depth in-service training. CIT prepares officers to better manage crises involving people with mental illness. Overarching training goals are (1) to improve officer and consumer safety and (2) to help persons with mental disorders and/or substance use issues access mental health and/or substance use treatment rather than place them in the criminal justice system due to illness related behaviors.

Results from the Westchester County Community Health Assessment 2019-2021, a survey of County residents (N=2,716), reported “overall, mental health was 39% of respondents’ first area of health priority.” Respondents also selected “mental health services” (27.9%) as the top action that would “best improve the health of their communities.”

The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs defines the mobile crisis team as “a group of mental health professionals who are available to respond to calls for service at the request of law enforcement officers. The mobile crisis team's goal is to divert individuals from unnecessary jail bookings and/or emergency rooms.” Mobile crisis teams are a best practice for Behavioral Health Crisis Care (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2020).

The team is charged with addressing a wide range of mental health related crisis including conflict resolution, suicide threats, wellness checks, substance misuse, and more, relying on a trauma-informed de-escalation and harm reduction techniques. The primary role of MCRT is to support law enforcement in addressing mental health crisis by rapid engagement, assessment of needs, and providing short-term support and linkage to necessary services.

MCRT is responsible for warm handoffs for individuals in need of services. Such services can include crisis prevention and response team, crisis stabilization services, treatment programs, County Single Point of Access (SPOA), peer supports, care management, respite, and social services.

Benefits and expected outcomes of MCRT include (1) rapid response; (2) increased access to services; (3) strengthened connections to community resources; (4) effective Engagement of individuals experiencing a mental health crisis; (5) access to immediate assessment of mental health needs and services; (6) prevention of unnecessary law enforcement response; (7) prevention unnecessary arrest; and (8) trauma-informed response.

The MCRT model consists of Westchester County Department of Community Mental Health (DCMH) coordination and support in collaboration with contracted behavioral health agencies. This includes DCMH providing leadership in working with other County departments, local law enforcement, and local human and social services agencies. DCMH will provide planning oversight and coordination with county departments, law enforcement, and behavioral health agency teams.

BHAs will be selected through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process. Providers must have ability to bill public and private insurance providers and be a provider of licensed New York State behavioral health crisis services.

MCRT teams will utilize a case record system to track individuals served and provide data that will be used for strategic planning purposes. Initiative will include evaluation component to assess effectiveness of model.

The County plans, through its Department of Mental Health, to issue and RFP for the program in Fall 2021.

Negative Economic Impacts (EC 2)

Funds may be used to assist households or populations, preferably those most disproportionately impacted, by the negative economic impacts of the COVID-19 public health emergency. Specific categories of potential use include:

- Assistance to households
- Small business and non-profit support
- Aid to impacted industries
- Assistance to unemployed workers
- Expenses to improve efficacy of economic relief programs, and
- Services for QCT and other disproportionately impacted communities.

As previously discussed, COVID has had an impact on small business and non-profits throughout Westchester County (see Executive Summary). ARPA funds will be allocated to address negative economic impacts in these sectors. To strengthen the climate in which small business operates in Westchester County, a highly targeted, small business development and recovery program is being designed using ARPA funds that supports small businesses throughout the County.

In addition, a general small business development, nonprofit, and religious organization recovery fund will be established to support businesses/organizations that experienced negative economic impact because of COVID and fall outside of the targeted sectors.

COVID also exposed food insecurity, particularly in low socioeconomic status neighborhoods that are often classified as food deserts.

The entertainment, hospitality, and tourism sectors were hard hit by COVID and have been slow to recover. For more than a year people were reluctant to travel, live entertainment was put on hold and has yet to resume at a noticeable scale, and hospitality, particularly business travel, may have experienced a structural shift that reduces midweek occupancy. As of May 2021, hotel occupancy tax was off 50% compared to 2019 figures. Opportunity for the County to allocate ARPA funds to strengthen the entertainment and tourism sectors through product development that will have a positive impact on hospitality.

Downtown retail centers across Westchester County have experienced increased vacancy, primarily restaurants and niche boutique retail. To restore vibrancy to Westchester County's villages and downtown centers, ARPA funds will be allocated to provide incentives to small business, support marketing efforts, and design strategic events to attract visitors.

Recognizing COVID impacted a wide range of small business, nonprofit organizations and religious institutions, Westchester County will extend ARPA funds to these organizations that demonstrate continued impact, can document need, and advance the ARPA goals of equity and/or targeted investment in QCT.

Small Business, Nonprofit, and Religious Institution Grants – ARPA funding will be allocated to make grants to eligible businesses and organizations as part of the County's rebuilding effort. The ARPA COVID Relief Task Force will establish program guidelines for funding and market this opportunity through county and municipal governments, area chambers of commerce, and community groups. Westchester County provided grants to small businesses, nonprofit organizations, and religious institutions early during the pandemic to keep small business viable, and has established the appropriate capacity and organization systems to continue making these investments.

Technical Assistance and Success Coaching – To support small business recovery, Westchester County will provide a wide range of technical assistance and success coaching to small businesses and nonprofit organizations throughout the county, with focused attention on businesses located in downtowns and village centers hardest hit, as well as businesses and nonprofit organizations that serve residents of QCT.

Tourism Product Development – Investment in tourism has a multiplier effect that supports small business, nonprofit organizations, and municipal services. Enhancing Westchester County’s tourism product mix will result in increased sales in multiple sectors.

Tourism Promotion – To attract visitors back to Westchester County, a tourism promotion campaign will be designed showcasing the county’s great assets and emphasizing its diverse culture, thriving downtowns, quaint village centers, and incredible natural landscape. The campaign will seek to drive overnight stays and increase visitor spending.

Workforce Development – Attracting highly skilled talent is critical to the long-term recovery from COVID. The pandemic continues to effect small business’ ability to secure the necessary workforce to reemerge from COVID and to grow over the next five years. Westchester County is dedicated to supporting workforce development efforts across the county. ARPA funds will be used to strengthen workforce development in key economic sectors and target investment for residents living in qualified census tracts.

Performance measures associated with negative economic impact consider both short-term recovery and long-term rebuilding. Below outlines key performance measures:

- Jobs Created
- Jobs Retained
- Capital Investment
- Workforce Development Program Enrollment and Completion
- Workforce Development Placement
- Business Starts
- Occupancy Rate – Hotel Tax
- Commercial Vacancy Rate – Downtowns and Designated Districts

Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities (EC 3)

In addition to specific services to address health disparities, previously described, the IFR outlines certain services that are eligible when provided in a QCT to families and individuals living in the QCTs or to other households, businesses or populations disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. These services include:

- Investments in housing and neighborhoods to address homelessness, affordable housing development, housing vouchers, residential counseling, or housing navigations assistance;
- Addressing educational disparities; and
- Promoting healthy childhood environments.

Housing Disparities

Westchester County plans to allocate ARPA funds to develop housing and prevent evictions for its most vulnerable residents. The investment will be targeted for QCTs and other disproportionately impacted communities to be determined.

A Westchester County Housing Needs Assessment was conducted in November 2019. Among the key conclusions:

- “There are 345,885 housing units in Westchester...The need for affordable housing in Westchester County totals 82,451 units; however, the greatest portion of these units are not substandard, so addressing the affordability of some portion of these units could be through rental assistance programs like the federal Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program. The total number of new affordable housing units needed is 11,703. This represents the total number of Westchester households that are severely overcrowded or Homeless, as well as the non-Westchester Homeseeker registrants...
- 141,570 households (41.4% of the total number in the county) are living in homes and apartments that are paying more than 30% of their income toward their housing costs...
- There is a shortage of housing for extremely low-income renters, people with disabilities, seniors, large families and the homeless; In particular, families and individuals who face intellectual and developmental disabilities, who need specialized housing with services, are not being adequately served...
- The affordable housing needed to address the current number of homeless households is an additional 846 units...
- The gap in rental affordability is as significant as home purchasing...
- There is no municipality where the market rate rent for a 2-BR unit is affordable to households earning the local hourly renter wage...”

Twelve recommendations emerged from the Housing Needs Assessment:

“1: Affordable Housing Education Workshop Series: Contract with an organization with a focus on housing policy, education, technical assistance and municipal engagement to establish a series of workshops to facilitate educational sessions regarding affordable housing.

2: Increase the Community Based Organization Capacity: Establish an annual funding allocation to cover the tuition associated with professional certification programs in housing and community development through NeighborWorks America®.

3: Housing Inventory & Tracking System: Conduct a bi-annual update of the existing affordable housing inventory - utilizing the existing housing inventory database. Establish a permanent tracking and monitoring system of all housing developments over 10 units. Share with economic development entities and Industrial Development Agencies to ensure housing and wages are in alignment.

4: Community Land Trust: Create a countywide community land trust and focus on capturing housing headed into foreclosure as an eviction prevention strategy but maintain flexibility to address a multitude of development concerns.

5: Municipal Ordinances: Design a formal program to provide technical assistance to municipalities to draft model ordinances for example, Accessory Dwelling Units, specifically targeted for affordable housing.

6: Adaptive Reuse of Under-Utilized Property: Design a property disposition program for the adaptive re-use of land and buildings, including older office park campuses, for the purpose of developing new affordable housing.

7: Housing Compact between County and Municipalities: Gather support from the local businesses, municipalities, and community-based organizations to work together to meet the needs of affordable housing in the County.

8: Neighborhood Revitalization Opportunities: Utilize the Affordable Housing Needs Assessment data in addition to existing web-based systems to explore the specific needs of individual neighborhoods and establish a data rich system to analyze community conditions.

9: Eviction and Foreclosure Prevention Services: Expand existing eviction and foreclosure prevention programs.

10: Employer Assisted Housing Program: Establish an Employer Assisted Housing program by creating public-private partnerships with major employers, hospitals, county staff and large-scale not-for-profit housing providers and healthcare agencies.

11: Pre-development and Preservation Options: Create and provide funding for not-for-profit housing agencies for pre-development costs associated with the construction and preservation of affordable housing.

12: Funding Opportunities: Offers a couple of examples of options to provide a source of funding to undertake the recommendations above and increase the funding stream for the County's affordable housing programs.”

Building Stronger Communities

Further, Westchester County plans to allocate ARPA Funds to building stronger communities.

The nonprofit sector in Westchester County provides a wide range of critical services to residents. The pandemic tested the strength of Westchester County's nonprofit sector, a network of more of than 500 non-profit organizations with 35,000 individuals contributing nearly 400,000 hours since the beginning of COVID (Volunteer NewYork.org, August 2021). To build stronger communities, Westchester County must continue to mobilize the volunteer corps. Investment in ARPA funds will ensure organization capacity is built and community resiliency is reinforced.

An area of focus for ARPA investment is supporting Westchester County's youth, particularly those living in QCTs and single parent households, who were impacted by COVID-19. To gain a sense of this impact, Westchester County Youth Bureau is seeking proposals to conduct a countywide Community Needs Assessment to identify existing resources, assess persistent needs, emerging trends and challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, detect gaps in services, and provide results-based recommendations to improve conditions for children, youth, and

families in the County. Participatory evaluation in a mixed-method research approach will be incorporated into the design. Proposals are due September 30, 2021 and the planning will commence shortly thereafter. Key initiatives developed as a result of the Youth Bureau's Community Needs Assessment will be positioned for ARPA investment through a Building Stronger Communities Grant outlined below.

Building Stronger Communities Grant – Westchester County will dedicate ARPA funds to establish a grant program for non-profit organizations and religious institutions. The ARPA taskforce will work with key stakeholders from the nonprofit sector to design a grant program with targeted investment in the following focus areas:

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

To strengthen the nonprofit sector's capacity and increase the level of accountability associated with the ARPA funds, a robust evaluation will be integrated into the grant program design. The evaluation will align with the overall performance measures for the ARPA funds, with emphasis placed on transformation, capacity building, equity, and accountability.

ARPA Building Stronger Communities grantees will be provided a series of organizational development wraparound services and technical assistance. For each grantee, an organization development assessment will be conducted, and a capacity building strategy established to deliver effective, market-driven, evidence-based programs; ensure organization systems are in place to both manage program implementation and measure performance/impact; and support organization growth and reliable, sustained change.

Westchester County's Building Stronger Communities program is designed to strengthen the county's nonprofit sector and improve the services available to individuals and families who have been impacted from COVID. Through strategic investment of ARPA funds, coupled with wraparound technical assistance and success coaching, greater impact can be realized by:

- Delivering effective, evidence-based programs that demonstrate
- Achieving greater equity in qualified census tracts and other neighborhoods/communities with the high disparities
- Increasing accountability through program evaluation and data analytics; and
- 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.

To measure impact of ARPA funding on nonprofit organizations and religious institutions, the following key performance indicators will be incorporated.

- Constituents/Patrons Served

- Donor and Donation Growth
- Fundraising Return on Investment/Overhead Costs

In addition to the organization metrics outlined above, two to three additional program-specific performance measures will be defined.

Premium Pay (EC 4)

Premium pay may be provided retroactively for work performed at any time since January 27, 2020. Westchester County does not anticipate allocating ARPA funds for this purpose.

Water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure (EC 5)

The IFR aligns eligible uses in this area to those projects that would be eligible to receive financial assistance through the EPA Clean Water State Revolving Fund and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund. This does not mean that the project must have been approved for funding under these sources, just that the eligible uses are consistent with those allowed under these programs. Also, recognizing the importance of universally available high-speed broadband coverage, ARPA provides funds to make necessary investments in broadband infrastructure.

Westchester County plans to allocate \$28M in ARPA funds in infrastructure investment. Identified to date are projects at two wastewater recovery facilities in the County. ARPA investment will target the recovery facilities serving QCTs in Port Chester and Peekskill. These two facilities were identified based on the need for upgrades and the financial impact to the district if the cost was fully borne by users. Currently, these projects are in the planning stages. Other projects may be identified as the County goes through its public engagement process.

Improvements to the wastewater infrastructure, namely the processing plant, will result in greater efficiency and lead to reduced operating costs. Below are performance measures associated with ARPA investment in wastewater infrastructure:

- Operating and Maintenance Expenses
- Emergency Maintenance Events
- Volume
- Waste Treatment

Revenue Replacement (EC 6)

Counties may use Recovery funds for the provision of “government services” to the extent of the reduction in revenue experience due to the pandemic. Westchester County does not anticipate allocating ARPA funds for this purpose at this time.

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 – Over a five-year period, 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 – Over a five-year period, 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 – Over a five-year period, Westchester County will transform its response to behavioral health crises, integrating Mobile Crisis Response Teams (MCRT) into its public safety protocol and collaborating with police Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT) to achieve greater public health outcomes associated with mental/behavioral health crisis and reduce the need for forcible intervention.

Goal 4 – Over a five-year period, Westchester County will strengthen the regional economy by investing ARPA funding in workforce development, extending access to capital for small business, nonprofit organizations, and religious institutions, 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, and capital investment.

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, social service providers, and religious institutions 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 for essential workers;
- 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 planning for the allocation of ARPA funding. This community engagement includes a series of public hearings and targeted community meetings with impacted residents of Westchester County. Overall, public hearings will be held no less than annually to report on the progress and impact of ARPA funds on Westchester County.

Metrics to be developed will include the following process measures:

- Public hearings held annually associated with the reporting requirements for ARPA
- Community meetings to inform program development
- Community meetings to report on program impact and evaluation

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.

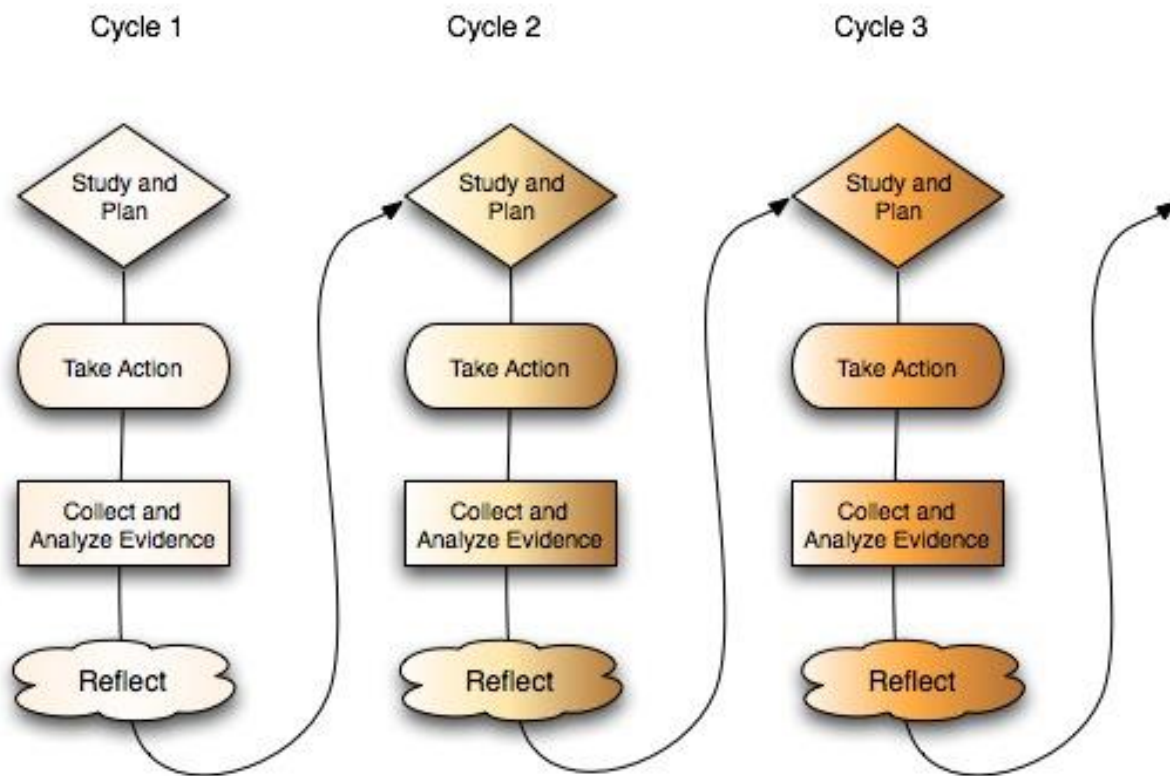
Use of Evidence

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 building stronger communities 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	-	-
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	-	-

Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
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	-	-
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	-	-

Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
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	-	-
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 Provision

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