



Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET

SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Work Group

July 20, 2021

10:30am

Main Meeting Room, Town Hall, 933 Hopmeadow Street

SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

Call to Order

- 1) Discussion of process and potential uses for ARPA funds
- 2) Next steps and meeting date

Adjournment

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN (ARP) FUNDS

Usage Eligibility Overview



*The following are **eligible** uses for the ARP funds*

Public Health Measures to Respond to COVID-19

- Continuation of vaccination campaigns
- Monitoring the spread of COVID-19 variants
- Behavioral healthcare services
 - Depression or anxiety
 - Assist individuals affected by domestic violence to access services
- Mitigation and Prevention
 - Vaccination Programs
 - Medical Care (Including Behavioral Health Care)
 - Testing
 - Contact Tracing
 - Support for Isolation or Quarantine
 - Supports for Vulnerable Populations to Access Medical or Public Health Services
 - Public Health Surveillance (Monitoring Case Trends, Genomic Sequencing for Variants)
 - Enforcement of Public Health Orders
 - Public Communication Efforts
 - Enhancement to Health Care Capacity (Care Facilities)
 - Personal Protective Equipment Purchases

Public Health Measures to Respond to COVID-19

- Mitigation and Prevention (continued)
 - Support for Prevention, Mitigation, or Other Services in Congregate Living Facilities and Other Key Settings (including Schools)
 - Ventilation Improvements in Congregate Settings, Health Care Settings, Other Key Locations
 - Enhancement of Public Health Data Systems
 - Capital Investments to Public Facilities to Meeting Pandemic Operation Needs (ie Public Hospitals, Health Clinics)
 - Payroll and Benefits for Public Safety, Public Health, Health Care, Human Services to the extent that their services are devoted to mitigating or responding to COVID-19
 - Engaging in Planning & Analysis in order to improve programs addressing the pandemic
 - Services To Address Health Disparities
 - Funding Community Health Workers to help community members access health services and services to address the social determinants of health
 - Funding Public Benefits Navigators to assist community members with navigating and applying for available benefits or services (State, Local etc)
 - Housing Services to support healthy living environments and neighborhoods conducive to mental and physical wellness
 - Remediation of lead paint or other lead hazards to reduce risk of elevated blood levels among children
 - Evidence-based community violence intervention programs to prevent violence and mitigate the increase in violence during the pandemic

Responding to Negative Economic Impacts

- Assistance to Unemployed Workers (Including Job Training)
- Deposits into the state account of the Unemployment Trust Fund established under section 904 of the Social Security Act
- Assistance to Households
 - Food Assistance
 - Rent/Mortgage
 - Utility Assistance
 - Counseling and Legal Aid to prevent eviction/homelessness
 - Emergency Assistance for Burials
 - Home Repairs
 - Winterization
 - Internet Access
 - Digital Literacy Assistance
- Expenses to Improve Efficacy of Economic Relief Programs
- Small Business & Non-Profits
 - Loans or Grants to mitigate financial hardship
 - Technical Assistance, counseling or other services to assist with business planning needs

Responding to Negative Economic Impacts

- Rehiring Local Government Staff
- Aid to Impacted Industries (Tourism, Travel and Hospitality)
 - Assistance to implement COVID-19 mitigation and infection prevention measures to enable safe resumption of tourism, travel and hospitality services
- Addressing Educational Disparities
- Promoting Healthy Childhood Environments
 - New or expanded high-quality childcare
 - Home visiting programs to provide structured visits from health, parent educators, and social service professionals to pregnant women or families with young children
 - Enhanced services for child welfare-involved families and foster youth

Premium Pay

- Eligible workers include those performing essential work during COVID or to provide grants to third party employers that have eligible workers. In particular, those that have borne a disproportionate share of the health and economic impacts, including
 - Staff at nursing homes, hospitals and home care settings
 - Workers at farms, food production facilities, grocery stores and restaurants
 - Janitors and sanitation workers
 - Truck drivers, transit staff and warehouse workers
 - Public health and safety staff
 - Childcare workers, educators and other school staff
 - Social service and human services staff

Investments in Infrastructure

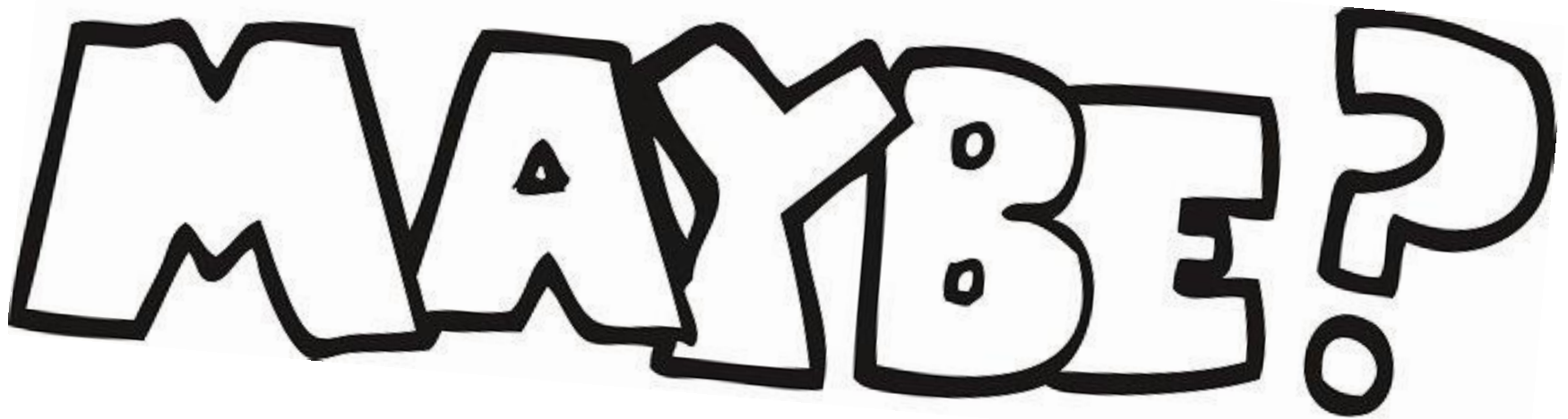
- Only for existing infrastructure in water, sewer and broadband - projects that improve access to clean drinking water, improve wastewater and storm water infrastructure systems and provide access to high quality broadband service
- Water & Sewer Infrastructure
 - Primary use is to assist communities in making water infrastructure capital improvements, including the installation and replacement of failing treatment and distribution systems
 - Projects that improve drinking water infrastructure, such as building or upgrading facilities and transmission, distribution and storage systems, including replacement of lead service lines
 - Cybersecurity needs to protect water and sewer infrastructure
- Broadband Infrastructure
 - Necessary investments in broadband infrastructure
 - Appropriate speed requirements for eligible projects need to be considered (further documentation on this can be provided)
 - Prioritize investments in fiber optic infrastructure where feasible, as such advanced technology enables the next generation of application solutions for all communities
 - Eligible projects are expected to focus on locations that are unserved or underserved - defined as a lack of access to a wireline connection capable of reliably delivering at least minimum speeds of 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload
 - Assistance to households facing negative economic impacts due to COVID-19 is also an eligible use, including internet access or digital literacy assistance



*The following are **ineligible** uses for the ARP funds*

Ineligible Uses

- Contributions to Rainy Day Funds, Reserves or Similar Funds
- Deposits into Pension Funds
- Offset a Reduction in Net Tax Revenue
- Non-Federal Match for Other Federal Programs
- Eligible Uses for Which Simsbury Does NOT Qualify
 - Building Stronger Communities Through Investments in Housing and Neighborhoods (we are not identified as a “qualified census tract”)
 - Revenue Loss (we do not meet the minimum thresholds)



MAYBE?

*The following are the **criteria that must be met** for potential uses not specifically outlined in the ARP guidance*

Criteria for Determining Appropriate Use

- To assess whether a program or service is an eligible use, a recipient should consider whether and how the use would respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency:
 - First, identify a need or negative impact of the COVID public health emergency, and;
 - Second, identify how the program, service or other intervention addresses the identified need or impact.

Possible Uses of Federal Stimulus Funds through 2026	Permitted Use?	Comments/Questions
Public Health		
1) FVHD needs combatting the pandemic (district-wide approach recommended)	Yes	Specifically relates to the pandemic
2) VNA (Visiting Nurses Assoc) needs combatting the pandemic	Yes	Specifically relates to the pandemic
3) Invest in capital equipment for the Ambulance Association such as ambulances	Yes	As long as the investment in capital is to meet pandemic operational needs
4) FVHD needs for implementation of their strategic plan (district-wide approach recommended)	Maybe	Need more information, what need or negative impact of COVID will this address and how would this address that need?
5) FVHD needs for other public health issues (district-wide approach recommended)	No	Has to be COVID related
6) Offset revenue losses for Ambulance Association during the pandemic (lower number of transports, fewer donations)	No	Revenue loss only pertains to State, local or Tribal government and funding can only be used for government services
7) Offset revenue losses for Ambulance Association for transports that are uninsured, and the difference between Medicare/Medicaid reimbursement amounts and private insurance reimbursement amounts	No	Revenue loss only pertains to State, local or Tribal government and funding can only be used for government services

Assist vulnerable populations of residents

1) Fund monthly grocery store gift cards for households participating in our food program	Yes	Funding will cover food insecurities, rent etc but I would like to stay away from gift cards. Since we don't know what is being purchased with the gift cards, we could get some push back on reimbursement. Ran into this with FEMA. Since they are both federal programs, likely to have the same issue
2) Fund new outside agency grant requests that were not funded during budget: 1) A Promise to Jordan (substance abuse/mental health) and 2) Gifts of Love (food insecurity, other related needs)	Yes	If they can show the need we can provide them a grant
3) Temporary program (5-year) or on-going trust to fund recreational/sports and campership opportunities for low and moderate income children (residents)	Maybe	Contributions to reserves or similar funds are not allowed; Cannot find specific guidance on sports/campership opportunities for low or moderate income children, however, if we can show what need or negative impact of COVID will this address and how would this address that need then could possible justify use of funds
4) Establish a trust for our food program	No	Contributions to reserves or similar funds are not allowed
5) Seed money to design and/or build our community center	No	This was already in our plan not addressing a negative COVID impact
6) Assist residents with rent/mortgage/utility payments	Yes	Specifically within guidance
7) Open Tariffville Elementary library for limited summer hours to help kids catch up with literacy efforts	Yes	Addresses educational disparities
8) Additional (temporary) Youth Services Social Worker (MSW level and/or clinical) to assist in increase of children needing mental health support services as a result of the pandemic	Yes	Specifically within guidance

Housing

1) Create and administer (or contract out) a first time homebuyer program	Yes	housing navigation assistance to facilitate household moves to neighborhoods with high levels of economic opportunity and mobility for low-income residents, to help residents increase their economic opportunity and reduce concentrated areas of low economic opportunity
2) Create and administer (or contract out) a down payment assistance program for home purchases	Yes	housing navigation assistance to facilitate household moves to neighborhoods with high levels of economic opportunity and mobility for low-income residents, to help residents increase their economic opportunity and reduce concentrated areas of low economic opportunity
3) Fund capital improvements to the Housing Authority properties which serves disabled and elderly adults	Maybe	Need more information, what need or negative impact of COVID will this address and how would this address that need?
4) Hire a consultant to assist in the development of a more robust Affordable Housing Plan	No	Activity only presumed eligible for families living in QCTs (Qualified Census Tract). Simsbury is not identified as a QCT and therefore, does not qualify
5) Hire a consultant to develop a housing needs assessment study	No	Activity only presumed eligible for families living in QCTs (Qualified Census Tract). Simsbury is not identified as a QCT and therefore, does not qualify
6) Create and maintain (or contract out) a housing rehabilitation revolving loan program	No	Activity only presumed eligible for families living in QCTs (Qualified Census Tract). Simsbury is not identified as a QCT and therefore, does not qualify

Possible Uses of Federal Stimulus Funds through 2026		Permitted Use?	Comments/Questions
Economic Development/Business Recovery			
1)	Establish a façade improvement revolving loan program for local businesses	Yes	They will just need to show that this money is needed because of COVID
	Establish a website for property owners to upload vacant office space, with an emphasis on <u>co-working space</u> o 3-year pilot, with option to extend for an additional 2-year period		
2)	o Initial cost \$3,500, partnership with the Chamber, annual maintenance fee of \$2,500 moving forward – EDC initiative from work plan	Yes	Assuming this is because people moved out of spaces because of COVID
3)	Streetscape and/or public parking/ and/or sidewalks and/or other infrastructure improvements in or near Main Street/downtown Tariffville to boost economic development in that neighborhood	Maybe	Need more information, what need or negative impact of COVID will this address and how would this address that need?
4)	Temporary downtown business district (Simsbury, Tariffville) beautification projects o 3-year program o Seasonal flowers and holiday lighting; utilize local nurseries and landscaping firms to maintain	Maybe	Need more information, what need or negative impact of COVID will this address and how would this address that need?
5)	Expedite capital improvement projects for Simsbury Meadows site	Maybe	Need more information, what need or negative impact of COVID will this address and how would this address that need? We can support tourism but funding is meant more to assist with reopenings, keeping safe etc
6)	Design, purchase and install wayfinding signage for downtown business districts (Simsbury, Tariffville) and/or the bike trails (unfunded past EDC work plan item, also identified in parking study and parks and open space master plan)	Maybe	Wayfinding signage could improve visibility and accessibility to restaurants, the PAC, and other businesses for trail users and downtown visitors
7)	Renovate Iron Horse Boulevard medians with landscaping and native plants	No	Does not address a need or negative impact of COVID
8)	Purchase and renovate DOT commuter lots for downtown business district parking	No	Does not address a need or negative impact of COVID
9)	Establish a fund to offset costs for sewer extensions to businesses and residents	No	Establishment of reserves of not permissible
11)	Reimbursement/grant program for businesses who made improvements to survive during COVID (i.e. outdoor dining)	Maybe	Can provide a grant to those to mitigate financial hardship - could not reimburse for specific expenditures but if they can show financial hardship we can issue a grant which they can use to reimburse themselves
12)	Co-working space lease (Fiddler's Green)	Maybe	Need more information, what need or negative impact of COVID will this address and how would this address that need?
13)	Doing Business in Simsbury Guide	No	Aid to Impacted Industries - Will only allow for assistance to implement COVID-19 mitigation and infection prevention measures to enable safe resumption of tourism, travel and hospitality services
14)	Development/Permitting Guide	No	Aid to Impacted Industries - Will only allow for assistance to implement COVID-19 mitigation and infection prevention measures to enable safe resumption of tourism, travel and hospitality services
15)	Tourism map - to be updated annually	No	Aid to Impacted Industries - Will only allow for assistance to implement COVID-19 mitigation and infection prevention measures to enable safe resumption of tourism, travel and hospitality services
16)	Software upgrades - reimbursement and/or grants for restaurants that had to procure online ordering software during COVID	Maybe	Can provide a grant to those to mitigate financial hardship - could not reimburse for specific expenditures but if they can show financial hardship we can issue a grant which they can use to reimburse themselves
17)	Delivery service for restaurants	Maybe	Can provide a grant to those to mitigate financial hardship - could not reimburse for specific expenditures but if they can show financial hardship we can issue a grant which they can use to reimburse themselves
18)	Marketing/branding (phases 2 and 3)	No	Aid to Impacted Industries - Will only allow for assistance to implement COVID-19 mitigation and infection prevention measures to enable safe resumption of tourism, travel and hospitality services
Offset Revenue Losses			
1)	Offset revenue losses for the parks and rec fund for pools, camp and the ice rink due to the pandemic. o Then build up fund balance in the fund so we can split golf and recreation into two separate revenue funds	No	Simsbury does not qualify for revenue loss based on guidance calculations provided
2)	Offset our revenue loss from investment income due to the pandemic o Then assign the money to capital reserve for CNR purchases	No	Simsbury does not qualify for revenue loss based on guidance calculations provided

Possible Uses of Federal Stimulus Funds through 2026		Permitted Use?	Comments/Questions
Pay for Essential Workers			
1)	Provide bonuses to our workforce (essential workers).	Yes	Cannot be used to reduce or substitute workers normal wages, so cannot use to offset wage increases
Other/Unsure			
1)	Hire a town DEI (diversity, equity, inclusion) position, to be shared with another town in the region	Yes	As long as this position focuses on disparities identified by or resulting from the pandemic
2)	Use funds to pay for school's Director of Equity	Yes	As long as this position focuses on education disparities, learning loss mitigation etc that may have been identified during the pandemic
3)	Upgrade town and school buildings HVAC and ventilation systems	Yes	Eligible
4)	Invest in our parks infrastructure	Maybe	Need more information, what need or negative impact of COVID will this address and how would this address that need?
5)	Fit out a space and retrofit for a Teen Center	Maybe	Will there be an educational purpose? Need more information, what need or negative impact of COVID will this address and how would this address that need?
6)	Use funds to pay for DEI training for staff	Maybe	If the training is going to assist with a need identified by the pandemic
7)	Use funds to pay for SPIRIT Council's data collection project	Maybe	Need more information, what need or negative impact of COVID will this address and how would this address that need?
8)	Purchase and maintenance of Owl Labs technology to conduct hybrid meetings	No	Does not address a need or negative impact of COVID