

A RECOVERY PLAN FOR MILWAUKEE COUNTY



ARPA TASK FORCE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Milwaukee County is expected to receive \$183.6 million from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021 signed by President Joseph R. Biden. The county has already received half of this allocation (\$92 million) and we are expecting to receive the other half in May of 2022. While significant, the ARPA funding we will receive is much less than the estimated \$300 to \$400 million total revenue that Milwaukee County will lose between 2021-2024 and is less than the approximately \$700 million in estimated deferred maintenance our county faces.

Why was the ARPA Task Force created?

The ARPA Task Force is a cross-section of Milwaukee County leaders who have been asked to make informed recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on how to spend our ARPA funding. The ARPA Task Force is charged with:

- Creating a process to broadly engage the public and ensure diverse input and ideas from Milwaukee County residents
- Determining the evaluation criteria for proposed projects, programs, and services in accordance with the guidance from the U.S. Department of Treasury
- Recommending funding allocations to the Board of Supervisors
- Monitoring the progress and reporting of funded projects, programs, and services
- Measuring the impact of ARPA spending and investments

Who created the ARPA Task Force?

Milwaukee County Board Chairwoman Marcelia Nicholson sponsored a resolution to create the ARPA Task Force in June 2021. County Executive David Crowley signed the resolution in July.

Who is on the ARPA Task Force?

The ARPA Task Force is comprised of six members:

- Co-Chair County Supervisor Shawn Rolland (Designated by County Board Chairwoman Marcelia Nicholson)
- Co-Chair Retired Executive Director of the United Community Center Ricardo Diaz (Designated by County Executive David Crowley)
- County Supervisor and Committee on Finance Chairman Jason Haas
- Grants & Special Projects Division Director Ashley Adsit (Designated by Department of Administrative Services Director Aaron Hertzberg)
- Comptroller Scott Manske
- Office on African American Affairs Director Jeffery Roman

Can Milwaukee County spend ARPA funds on whatever it wants?

The Act requires that spending be used for four general purposes:

- To respond to the public health emergency or its negative economic impacts
- To respond to workers performing essential work during COVID-19 through the provision of premium pandemic pay or grants to workers
- For the provision of government services to the extent of the reduction of revenue due to COVID-19, including lost revenues
- To make necessary investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure

What are we spending money on specific to the public health emergency?

Much of our spending has to be focused on costs we have and continue to incur as a result of the pandemic, including COVID-19 safety and protective purchases, COVID-19 related revenue losses, vaccine distribution and COVID-19 testing, increased need/demand for community and economic support programs, and IT and remote work-related investments so we could continue to function at a high level throughout the pandemic.

How does ARPA spending relate to Milwaukee County's long-term goals?

Everything we do in Milwaukee County is guided by our vision of achieving racial equity and becoming the healthiest county in Wisconsin. All proposed ARPA projects, programs, and services must align with our [Racial Equity Framework](#) and demonstrate how they will advance our County's health and racial equity goals. In the United States, COVID-19 has disproportionately affected underserved communities, where individuals who are non-Hispanic Black and Latinx are more than twice as likely as non-Hispanic whites to die from COVID-19. This stark disparity underscores important medical, social, economic, environmental, and political contexts that predate the COVID-19 pandemic.

How can residents stay informed and share their ideas with the ARPA Task Force?

Milwaukee County values transparency and accountability and the Task Force will ensure the public has full access to our decisions about how we spend our ARPA funds. Residents can visit www.county.milwaukee.gov/ARPA.taskforce for the most up-to-date information and to share their ideas. ARPA Task Force meetings are available via the [Milwaukee County Legislative Information Center \(CLIC\)](#), including audio and video streams, materials and minutes.

Will this funding solve all of Milwaukee County's fiscal challenges?

While significant, the \$183.6 million in ARPA funds will not solve the extreme fiscal challenges faced by the county. And notably, we will not be able to fund all or even most of the ideas we will receive from residents. However, there is an opportunity to make an impact by investing in areas that will save money over time and reserve valuable taxpayer dollars for preventative, upstream investments that improve health and racial equity outcomes for residents.

Why is community engagement so important?

Health and civic engagement are directly linked. When a culture of health exists, [people care about their communities and are more motivated to participate](#).

Community engagement:

- Fosters connectedness and trust
- Improves assessment efforts
- Builds capacity for residents to positively contribute to the community
- [Increases sustainability of change](#)

Milwaukee County's robust community engagement strategy in place for economic stimulus spending means we will be able to:

- Allocate funding more equitably and with the biggest impact by better understanding expressed community needs and priorities
- Garner support for medium and long-term growth funding strategies
- [Better measure the impact of our spending decisions](#)

**LEARN MORE AND SHARE IDEAS WITH THE ARPA TASK FORCE
AT COUNTY.MILWAUKEE.GOV/ARPA.TASKFORCE**

