
PALM BEACH COUNTY

Recovery Plan

State and Local Fiscal
Recovery Funds

2021 Report





Palm Beach County 2021 Recovery Plan

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) includes \$290.7 million in direct local recovery assistance for Palm Beach County. The County's Plan fully complies with the U.S. Treasury Department's Interim Final ARPA Rule. It guarantees that the direct ARPA assistance will be allocated prior to the December 31, 2024 deadline and that all ARPA expenditures will be completed by December 31, 2026, as required by federal law.

Like the Country, Palm Beach County has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to the pandemic the County's unemployment rate was 3.1% and it rose to 13.3% in May 2020. The rate decreased to 4.8% in January 2021 but has increased slightly to 5.3% in June 2021. In August 2020 the County's daily positivity test rate was 10.21% but dropped to a low of 2.78% in the beginning of June 2021. With the delta variant causing a rapid resurgence we have now experienced a rise in the daily positivity test rate to 17.9% in August 2021. In addition, in August 2020, COVID positive patients in area hospitals was reported at 420 patients, but hospitalization reports reached a census of 967 patients admitted in August 2021. Palm Beach County has needs as the pandemic continues to impact our citizens.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the County was able to use CARES funds to assist small businesses, provide mortgage and rental relief for housing, broadband enhancements for teleworking and virtual learning, emergency food distribution, assist not-for-profits, childcare, and direct public health assistance through testing, vaccines, contact tracing and personal protection equipment (PPEs).

Palm Beach County's Recovery & Resilience Plan is a strategic allocation of \$290.7 million to help the County fully recover and provide long lasting projects that will impact our citizens for years to come. It builds on County momentum to bring the COVID-19 pandemic under control; addresses the urgent needs of residents, families and neighborhoods hardest hit by the COVID-19 public health emergency; and makes investments to generate economic recovery and rebuilding.

USES OF FUNDS

The Board of County Commissioners has approved general categories to meet the needs of our citizens. The County has not spent funds to date but has approved broad categories and will develop a more detailed plan with specific projects by fall 2021.

PUBLIC HEALTH:

Behavioral Health - \$10 million – Infrastructure improvements to the behavioral health system of care for the uninsured, underinsured, and low-income population. Service request statistics reported by the 211 Palm Beach/Treasure Coast helpline consistently list calls for mental health, crisis intervention, suicide prevention, and substance use disorders among the highest percentage of calls for assistance. During the COVID-19 pandemic, these calls exceeded the number of calls during the prior year for most months, and over the past 90 days, the volume of behavioral health-related calls has increased from 27.7% of all calls to 211 to 29.9%. Over the past five (5) years, Palm Beach County has experienced a number of non-profit behavioral health facility closures, leaving the uninsured, underinsured and low-income population vulnerable when trying to obtain services. Investing funds into the local Behavioral Health infrastructure will expand the capacity for behavioral health operators to provide services to this low-income population.



Testing, vaccines, antibodies treatment - \$3 million – direct support for testing, vaccines, and treatment

Public health expenses - \$4 million – public education messaging, PPEs, and COVID-19 related expenses

County Buildings Infrastructure - \$35.3 million – improvements to HVACs and projects to create safe spaces against COVID-19



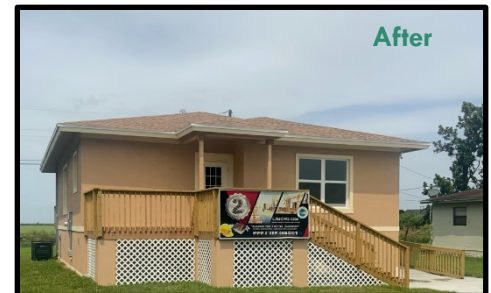
NEGATIVE ECONOMIC IMPACTS:

Infrastructure Cultural Organizations - \$4 million – matching funds to provide safe spaces against COVID-19 and assist in projects delayed due to the pandemic. The County's cultural sector generates more than \$633 million in economic activity annually and creates more than 14,000 jobs. COVID-19 has impacted the cultural sector significantly and many performing arts organizations have not reopened due to safety concerns.



SERVICES TO DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACTED COMMUNITIES:

Housing - \$60 million – Increase retention and supply of affordable and workforce housing. Due to COVID-19's community impact, we are implementing a multi-faceted approach to address the growing housing crisis in the County. These strategies are designed to support the creation and improvement of affordable and workforce housing within and/or adjacent to Qualified Census Tracts (QCT) (see map labeled as Exhibit 1). The housing strategies will require funding for construction, gap financing for contractors/developers, as well as, first and/or second mortgages to homebuyers.



Hunger Relief - \$10 million – Pantry infrastructure, support to extend the life of food, increase the quantity of food, and other related projects to support underserved households struggling with the long-term economic consequences caused by the pandemic, that continue to rely on the food assistance and services provided by the Food Bank and pantry system that serves this population.



INFRASTRUCTURE:

Water & Sewer - \$75 million – investments in water, sewer, storm water, and other resiliency projects including septic to sewer conversion and storm water.



Broadband & Cybersecurity - \$43 million – Allows for the County to increase its broadband infrastructure. We do not currently have the foundational fiber installed to provide coverage throughout the county. This expansion of our infrastructure will be leveraged to (1) increase our public offerings of internet signals (libraries, parks, etc.) and (2) offer internet coverage to students, as determined through our partnership with the School District. Additionally, the wider offering of our signal will require underlying additions to our cybersecurity framework.



REVENUE REPLACEMENT:

Revenue Replacement - \$46.4 million – Allows for governmental services to continue without lowering or deleting services. According to the calculation provided in the Interim Final Rule, Palm Beach County is eligible to use \$196.6 million for this purpose.

PROMOTING EQUITY

The ARPA funds will provide long lasting investments to these communities and will focus on Qualified Census Tract areas. Palm Beach County has a history of supporting and providing services to disproportionate communities and has several departments that provides services year round.

- Office of Equal Business Opportunity that targets small, minority and woman owned businesses to increase their participation in the procurement of goods and services
- Housing & Economic Development administers programs for housing, business development, and community initiatives
- Community Services that supports various health and human services to our very diverse low income citizens, homeless, veterans, and seniors

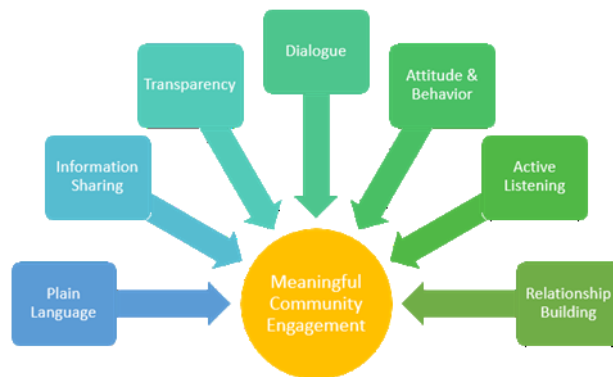
- Office of Community Revitalization works to improve the appearance of underserved neighborhoods and address community concerns regarding safety and activities for area youth
- Youth Services that supports youth by providing quality service, education, and access to resources and opportunities

The County's Housing strategies will help strengthen and improve housing options for low to moderate income, Black/African American and minority residents who reside in/or adjacent to a QCT. Our affordable and workforce housing options will promote equity for Black/African Americans and provide improved access to homeownership to all low-to-moderate income minorities; while educating them on the value of quality housing and sustainable neighborhoods. Through strategic steps, each of the individuals assisted will be provided with the opportunity to transition from unaffordable rental and/or blighted housing, to quality, sustainable affordable housing; which could increase household wealth.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Palm Beach County consistently includes communities when developing projects by meeting with the citizens in that area, presenting to local chamber of commerce and other organizations, mailing notices or door to door hang tags, and using various media sources – radio, newspapers, and television. In addition, many projects that require regulatory approval contain public notice requirements and provision of relevant information for the public to review. Palm Beach County's Community Services Department has hosted community outreach events that assisted individuals experiencing homelessness to receive their federal stimulus checks, and helped them understand how to use the funds toward a transition into permanent housing opportunities. They have also provided Community Health Workers to assist homeless and low-income individuals receive COVID-19 vaccinations and testing resources, and they have dispatched mobile units into underserved neighborhoods to assist residents with online applications for rent and utility assistance. They also hosted a rental assistance orientation session for landlords.

Palm Beach County has had a public meeting to approve the general use of the ARPA funds. Staff is in the process of detailing recommendations under the broader use categories to specific projects and will engage community stakeholders in a series of meetings to develop final recommendations for the Board of County Commissioners. A public survey will be developed and imbedded in our county website to use for continual input throughout the plan's existence.



LABOR PRACTICES

The County has had a living wage policy since 2003 for County construction contracts and provides funding to Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County for wage theft services, both nonpayment and under payment of wages. Additionally, ensuring contractors are paying a prevailing wage has always been a requirement when using federal funds and supports the need for paying a living wage.

TABLE OF EXPENSES BY EXPENDITURE CATEGORY

At this time Palm Beach County does not have any expenditures.

Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
1	Expenditure Category: Public Health		
1.1	COVID-19 Vaccination	0	
1.2	COVID-19 Testing	0	
1.3	COVID-19 Contact Tracing	0	
1.4	Prevention in Congregate Settings (Nursing Homes, Prisons/Jails, Dense Work Sites, Schools, etc.)	0	
1.5	Personal Protective Equipment	0	
1.6	Medical Expenses (including Alternative Care Facilities)	0	
1.7	Capital Investments or Physical Plant Changes to Public Facilities that respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency	0	
1.8	Other COVID-19 Public Health Expenses (including Communications, Enforcement, Isolation/Quarantine)	0	
1.9	Payroll Costs for Public Health, Safety, and Other Public Sector Staff Responding to COVID-19	0	
1.10	Mental Health Services	0	
1.11	Substance Use Services	0	
1.12	Other Public Health Services	0	
2	Expenditure Category: Negative Economic Impacts		
2.1	Household Assistance: Food Programs	0	
2.2	Household Assistance: Rent, Mortgage, and Utility Aid	0	
2.3	Household Assistance: Cash Transfers	0	

Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
2.4	Household Assistance: Internet Access Programs	0	
2.5	Household Assistance: Eviction Prevention	0	
2.6	Unemployment Benefits or Cash Assistance to Unemployed Workers	0	
2.7	Job Training Assistance (e.g., Sectoral job-training, Subsidized Employment, Employment Supports or Incentives)	0	
2.8	Contributions to UI Trust Funds*	0	
2.9	Small Business Economic Assistance (General)	0	
2.10	Aid to nonprofit organizations	0	
2.11	Aid to Tourism, Travel, or Hospitality	0	
2.12	Aid to Other Impacted Industries	0	
2.13	Other Economic Support	0	
2.14	Rehiring Public Sector Staff	0	
3	Expenditure Category: Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities		
3.1	Education Assistance: Early Learning	0	
3.2	Education Assistance: Aid to High-Poverty Districts	0	
3.3	Education Assistance: Academic Services	0	
3.4	Education Assistance: Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Services	0	
3.5	Education Assistance: Other	0	
3.6	Healthy Childhood Environments: Child Care	0	
3.7	Healthy Childhood Environments: Home Visiting	0	
3.8	Healthy Childhood Environments: Services to Foster Youth or Families Involved in Child Welfare System	0	
3.9.	Healthy Childhood Environments: Other	0	
3.10	Housing Support: Affordable Housing	0	
3.11	Housing Support: Services for Unhoused persons	0	
3.12	Housing Support: Other Housing Assistance	0	
3.13	Social Determinants of Health: Other	0	
3.14	Social Determinants of Health: Community Health Workers or Benefits Navigators	0	
3.15	Social Determinants of Health: Lead Remediation	0	
3.16	Social Determinants of Health: Community Violence Interventions	0	
4	Expenditure Category: Premium Pay		

Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
4.1	Public Sector Employees	0	
4.2	Private Sector: Grants to other employers	0	
5	Expenditure Category: Infrastructure		
5.1	Clean Water: Centralized wastewater treatment	0	
5.2	Clean Water: Centralized wastewater collection and conveyance	0	
5.3	Clean Water: Decentralized wastewater	0	
5.4	Clean Water: Combined sewer overflows	0	
5.5	Clean Water: Other sewer infrastructure	0	
5.6	Clean Water: Storm water	0	
5.7	Clean Water: Energy conservation	0	
5.8	Clean Water: Water conservation	0	
5.9	Clean Water: Nonpoint source	0	
5.10	Drinking water: Treatment	0	
5.11	Drinking water: Transmission & distribution	0	
5.12	Drinking water: Transmission & distribution: lead remediation	0	
5.13	Drinking water: Source	0	
5.14	Drinking water: Storage	0	
5.15	Drinking water: Other water infrastructure	0	
5.16	Broadband: "Last Mile" projects	0	
5.17	Broadband: Other projects	0	
6	Expenditure Category: Revenue Replacement		
6.1	Provision of Government Services	0	
7	Administrative and Other		
7.1	Administrative Expenses	0	
7.2	Evaluation and data analysis	0	
7.3	Transfers to Other Units of Government	0	
7.4	Transfers to Non-entitlement Units (States and Territories only)	0	

Exhibit 1

