

**The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021
Coronavirus State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF)
ACTION PLAN
ROUND 1 COMPETITIVE GRANT**

BACKGROUND

Cumberland County made available a total of Eleven Million dollars in competitive American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to qualifying projects that propose big, bold investments in order to deliver equitable outcomes and transformative impacts. Projects and/or programs must first meet one or more of the Statutory Eligible uses outlined within sections 602 & 603 of the American Rescue Plan Act Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF).

Funded projects must either respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency or its negative economic impacts. Additionally, the County established and implemented the Applicant tiers and priorities system. Only applications that meet both Tier 1 & Tier 2, and Priorities 1 & 2 were scored. Applications currently being recommended for funding meet Tier 1&2, which are Projects and programs that will have an immediate impact, are “shovel-ready,” and highly important. Additionally, these applications also meet the priorities of 1 & 2; which are Shovel Ready Housing/ Homelessness Units, and Capacity gain for Mental Health & Substance Use Disorder.

Any application that was not shovel-ready - even if it fits within Priority 1 or 2 - was not reviewed, and placed within the next Tier. Projects that are not shovel-ready are those that are not able to quickly spend out funding. For example, South Portland Housing Authority was seeking funds to create more affordable housing, but has not yet obtained the site plan review from the planning board. For this reason, the project was placed into the next Tier.

PROJECT SELECTION

County Commissioners allocated \$11 million of the first tranche of ARPA funds to Open Competitive grants. In order to identify specific projects, the County Compliance Manager

conducted a competitive grant application process for program funds. External agencies were invited to apply through this process. Their applications were then reviewed by the ARPA Advisory Committee (AAC), a group of 4 County residents and 3 County Staff. The AAC made funding recommendations to the County Commissioners for approval. The round 1 Competitive Grant Schedule was as follows:

- Pre-Application Process October 15, 2021 - close November 15, 2021
- January 06, 2022 Application portal Open
- January 20, 2022 Applications DUE by 4:00 PM
- February 28, 2022 Status of the current application review process
- March 15, 2022, AAC recommendations presented to County Commissioners, First Reading and also Public Hearing.
- April 11, 2022, County Commissioners Public Hearing & Approval
- All meetings were noticed and open to the public

Name	Funding Requested	AAC Recommendations	County Manager Recommendations	County Manager guidance on recommendations
MaineHealth dba Maine Medical Center Recuperative Care Program	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 250,000.00	\$ -	The project is currently underway and MaineHealth has the financial means to cover the overrun.
Westbrook Housing Authority The Stacey M. Symbol Apartments	\$ 565,000.00	\$ 565,000.00	\$ 565,000.00	
Westbrook Housing Authority The Stroudwater Apartments	\$ 535,000.00	\$ 535,000.00	\$ 535,000.00	
Preble Street Food Security Hub	\$ 2,500,000.00	\$ 2,500,000.00	\$ 1,500,000.00	Preble Street has other funding requests out for consideration.
Maine Recovery Fund A ride to work	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 100,000.00	
Habitat for Humanity Greater Portland_ New Home Build Program South Portland & Standish	\$ 2,600,000.00	\$ 2,600,000.00	\$ 2,600,000.00	
Avesta Housing Avesta Seavey Street	\$ 350,000.00	\$ 350,000.00	\$ 350,000.00	
TDB LLC VERTICAL HARVEST MAINE	\$ 8,000,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	
Avesta Avesta Meadowview II	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 250,000.00	
Avesta Avesta Village Commons	\$ 350,000.00	\$ 350,000.00	\$ 350,000.00	
Youth and Family Outreach Building a Brighter Future	\$ 300,000.00	\$ 300,000.00	\$ 300,000.00	
Quality Housing Coalition Growing Project HOME	\$ 150,870.00	\$ 150,870.00	\$ 30,000.00	The application listed three areas the original \$150K was to be applied for. Only one of the three areas qualifies under Commissioner guidance. The submitted budgeted amount for insurance premiums is \$30,000.
Maine Pretrial Services Direct Support Access	\$ 175,000.00	\$ 175,000.00	\$ -	Commissioner guidance and criteria prevent 3 months of funding.
Greater Portland Community Land Trust Randall Street Affordable Housing Project	\$ 500,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	
Portland Recovery Community Center Building Hope and Creating Community	\$ 515,152.00	\$ 515,152.00	\$ 515,152.00	

Budget	\$ 11,000,000.00
Total Request	\$ 17,141,022.00
Total Recommendation:	\$ 8,641,022.00
Remaining Balance	\$ 2,358,978.00
Total Recommendations by	\$ 7,095,152.00
Remaining Balance	\$ 3,904,848.00

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECTS

Mental Health & Substance Use Disorder

Recuperative Care Program Maine Health dba Maine Medical Center is seeking funds to support renovation costs to create a medical clinic and recuperative recovery /meals/activity space. Recuperative care is short-term residential care that allows individuals experiencing homelessness the opportunity to recover in a safe environment while accessing medical care and other supportive services.

Applicants Funding Request \$924,000.00

AAC Recommendation \$250,000. *This amount is isolated to the build-out within this grant.

County Manager Recommendations \$0. The project is currently underway and MaineHealth has the financial means to cover the overrun.

A ride to work- Maine Recovery Fund is seeking ARPA funds to support employment and integrative services for people in Cumberland County recovering from substance use disorder, reentering from jail and prison, new Americans, and returning veterans facing reentry obstacles. ARPA funds would pay for transportation costs, such as bus passes, uber, or taxi services.

Applicants Funding Request \$100,000.00

AAC Recommendation \$100,000.00

Direct Support Access- Maine Pretrial Services is seeking ARPA funds to assist 74 clients with room and board fees associated with recovery residences. These funds with Dovetail with existing funding and allow for each of the 74 clients to be housed for 3months.

Applicants Funding Request \$175,000.00

AAC Recommendation \$175,000.00

County Manager Recommendation \$0 Commissioner guidance and criteria prevent 3 months of funding.

Building Hope and Creating Community - Portland Recovery Community Center requests Cumberland County ARPA funding to support building renovation that makes existing space COVID-19 friendly and thereby allows for expanded services. The building renovation will allow more people affected by addiction to receive effective in-person recovery support despite COVID-19.

Applicants Funding Request \$515,152.00

AAC Recommendation \$515,152.00

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECTS

Homelessness and Housing

Stacey M. Symbol Apartments- Westbrook Housing Authority is seeking funding to support the development of 60 newly constructed affordable apartments reserved for seniors earning at or below 50% and 60% of Area Median Income (AMI). The goal of the project is to help mitigate rising costs of housing within the local market that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Applicants Funding Request \$565,000.00

AAC Recommendation \$565,000.00

The Stroudwater Apartments- Westbrook Housing Authority is seeking funds to support the creation of Stroudwater apartments, which will consist of 55 newly constructed affordable apartments reserved for seniors earning at or below 50% and 60% of Area Median Income (AMI). By creating more long-term affordable housing options for seniors we hope to alleviate both short-term and long-term strains on the system to allow people to live stably and safely for years to come. The County ARPA funds will be used to help cover rapidly escalating construction costs.

Applicants Funding Request \$535,000.00

AAC Recommendation \$535,000.00

Seavey Street – Avesta Housing is seeking American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to help acquire a 2.5+ acre parcel in Westbrook, ME. The parcel is located on Seavey Street, on the site of an old rail line, and is within a qualified census tract (QCT). Avesta would develop 60+ units of affordable housing on the site with all units restricted to 60% of AMI or below. The units will be all one-bedroom units; the target population will be older-adults 55+. This development is part of a larger effort to reinvigorate an infill site in the heart of Downtown.

Applicants Funding Request \$350,000.00

AAC Recommendation \$350,000.00

Meadowview II – Avesta Housing is proposing to use the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to help acquire a 7+ acre parcel in Gray, ME. These funds will have an immediate impact in helping to preserve land for affordable housing. Avesta will develop 27 units of affordable housing on the site with all units restricted to 60% of AMI or below. This development is part of a larger effort to reinvigorate an existing affordable housing site and create a campus atmosphere in the Village Center of Gray. The

addition of these 27 units to the existing campus of 20 senior units will also allow Avesta to bring more scale to this site and will make community services more comprehensive and readily available.

Applicants Funding Request \$250,000.00

AAC Recommendation \$250,000.00

Village Commons –Avesta Avesta Housing is proposing to use the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to help acquire a .44+ acre parcel in Scarborough, ME. Avesta will develop 31 units of affordable senior housing on the site. There will be 30 one-bedroom units and one efficiency in a three-story elevator building. The units will be restricted to older adults, 55+ and all units will be affordable, reserved for individuals or couples earning less than or equal to 60% of AMI. A further 19 of these units will be set aside for individuals or couples earning less than or equal to 50% of AMI. All utilities are included in the rent helping to facilitate affordability by reducing the burden of housing expenses.

Applicants Funding Request \$350,000.00

AAC Recommendation \$350,000.00

VERTICAL HARVEST MAINE - The Vertical Harvest Maine project is a public-private partnership (P3) with the following components: a (i) Vertical Farm, (ii) 60 Units of Affordable Housing, (iii) a Parking Structure which acts as infrastructure to the Affordable Housing and contains commercial space; and (iv) Sewer & Stormwater upgrades and relocation. The project is being developed and executed in partnerships among TDB LLC, the City of Westbrook, Community Housing of Maine, and Vertical Harvest L3C. TDB LLC has submitted the application to the County as one of the partners in this project. The Project request was \$8 million in ARPA funding for the following: \$4.605 million to be spent on the infrastructure for the affordable housing which is contained within the parking structure. The parking structure has four levels and the affordable housing is located on levels five and six that sit on top of the parking structure. \$2.707 million shall be spent on the upgrades for the sewer & stormwater infrastructure. \$702,000 shall be spent on the construction of the 60 units of Affordable Housing located on floors 5 & 6 of the structure. The Committee had a hard time identifying the funding gap based on the information provided by the applicant. The Committee requested additional feedback, and still felt that the available materials from Vertical Harvest were not sufficient to recommend funding.

Applicants Funding Request \$8,000,000.00

AAC Recommendation \$0

Food Security Hub -Preble Street is seeking ARPA funds to refurbish and to convert the existing Food Security Hub space to a commercial production and processing kitchen, which will involve both construction build-out and foodservice equipment purchases. The move from the former office building cafeteria kitchen only supported 40-60 meals a day, the current space allows for an increase in production to 1,400 meals per day out of the space.

Applicants Funding Request \$2,500,000.00

AAC Recommendation \$2,500,000.00

County Manager Recommendation \$1,500,000.00 Preble Street has other funding requests out for consideration.

New Home Build Program- Habitat for Humanity Greater Portland is seeking ARPA funding to support the construction of twenty, energy-efficient, single-family homes, for low-income first-time homebuyers. The homes will be located in both South Portland and in Standish.

Applicants Funding Request \$2,600,000.00

AAC Recommendation \$2,600,000.00

Building a Brighter Future - Youth and Family Outreach are seeking County ARPA funding to support an expansion of existing Childcare facility that will include affordable housing above to support the overhead of the daycare. The funds will be used for infrastructure; the construction portion of the development

Applicants Funding Request \$300,000.00

AAC Recommendation \$300,000.00

Growing Project HOME- Quality Housing Coalition sought ARPA funding for Administration funding as well funds to support an Insurance fund. The insurance fund would support persons and families seeking housing that are hard to house, by providing funds to support obtaining and retaining rental housing.

Applicants Funding Request \$150,870.00

AAC Recommendation \$150,870.00

County Manager Recommendation \$30,000.00 . The application listed three areas the original \$150K was to be applied for. Only one of the three areas qualifies under Commissioner guidance. The submitted budgeted amount for insurance premiums is \$30,000.

Randall Street Affordable Housing Project - Greater Portland Community Land Trust is seeking ARPA funding to support the creation of 16 affordable homes located at 21 Randell Street Portland, Maine. The AAC did not recommend funding under this round. Current Architectural plans do not clearly reflect ADA federal requirements, and would need to be finalized and clearly outline the proposed Best Practices asked of developers by the committee.

Applicants Funding Request \$500,000.00

AAC Recommendation \$0

Additional committee feedback

The AAC also identified two areas in which applicants awarded funds will be required to provide additional compliance steps as a stipulation of the awards. For Housing Developers, we will ask that all developer fee profits are set up in the form of forgivable loans that roll back into the development. This has already been acknowledged by both developers and is common practice; however, we are asking that it be secured in writing at the onset of the award.

The other stipulation is with regards to Diversity Equity Inclusion and Accessibility. President Biden and the Department of Treasury have made advancing racial equity a central tenet in decision-making on how these funds can be spent. In the rules Treasury developed for the ARP's State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, "While the pandemic affected communities across the country, it disproportionately impacted some demographic groups and exacerbated health inequities along racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic lines." This approach has placed racial equity front and center. The pandemic cast in stark relief the racial disparities that have persisted in this country for far too long. Black, Latino, and Native Americans were more likely to be infected, hospitalized, or to die from COVID-19 than their white counterparts.

Communities of color were forced to bear a double burden in this pandemic: they were more likely to work in essential, frontline roles with a higher risk of exposure, and also more likely to lose those jobs as the pandemic caused the economy to contract.

Long before most of us had ever heard the word "coronavirus," this country has suffered from a profound racial wealth gap that makes it harder for communities of color to weather economic downturns, from the pandemic to the financial crisis more than a decade ago. The median wealth of white households is 7.8 times that of Black households and 5.2 times that of Hispanic households, while the rate of homeownership among white Americans is 1.7 times the rate among Black Americans. COVID-19 did not cause these disparities, but it exacerbated them and demonstrated the urgent need for change.

The Committee, upon review of written and hearing the verbal statements from applicants, identified this as an area where some agencies excel and others are lacking far behind.

As such, the committee will begin reviewing the current ARPA stipulations and building off of these to promote and assist agencies with creating action plans that are not just written, but put into practice.