

# Executive Summary

In March of 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was passed by the United States Congress and signed into the law. ARPA provided \$1.9 trillion dollars to address the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic across the country. This included providing funding directly to state, local, territorial, and tribal governments to address the impact of the pandemic in their communities. The City of Chelsea received approximately \$40 million in ARPA from the state and federal governments. This report details the community-driven process that Chelsea used to develop and prioritize key funding strategies for these ARPA funds.

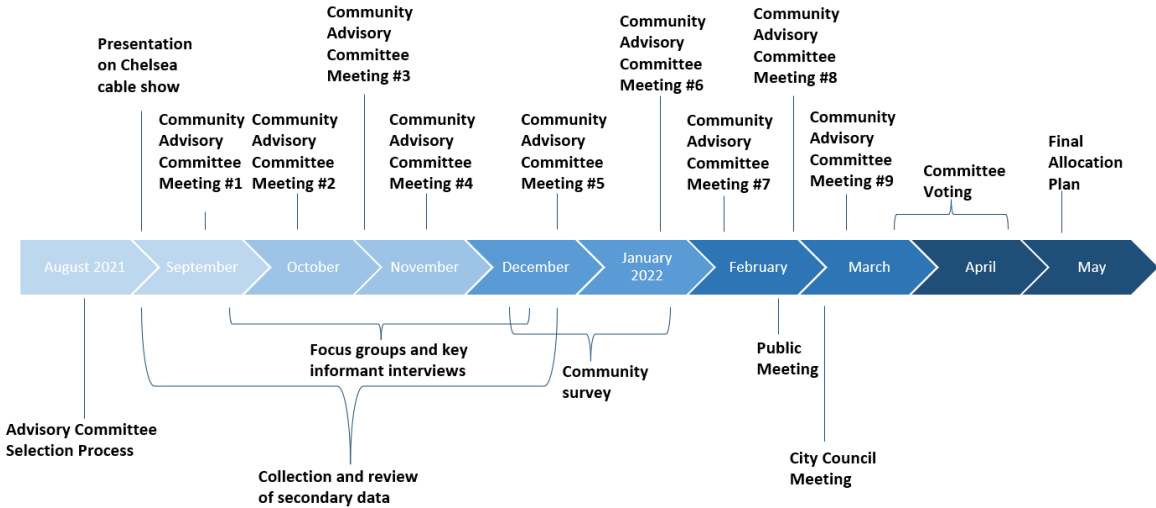
### Community Fund Allocation Process

Chelsea received \$40 million dollars in ARPA funds in 2021. Of that, \$25 million was used to offset City revenue lost due to the pandemic. The City elected to use the remaining \$15 million to create a Community Fund to support initiatives and priorities developed by the community to address priority needs in Chelsea. To frame the process, six priority areas were identified for further exploration and understanding through data collection efforts. These priority areas were:

- Housing
- Food Security
- Small Business Development
- Workforce Development
- Environmental Health & Open Spaces
- Behavioral and Mental Health

A participatory community process, led by a Community Advisory Committee, was implemented to inform the allocation strategies. To inform the allocation process and Advisory Committee decision making and to further understanding of the six priority areas and their impact on Chelsea residents, data were collected through key informant interviews and focus groups, a review of secondary data, and a resident survey.

Figure 1. Timeline of Key Activities



Advisory Committee members reviewed relevant secondary data, as well as findings from community engagement activities, to inform the creation and prioritization of strategies to fund through the allocation process. The Committee conducted an initial voting process to rank strategies from highest to lowest priority. Following the creation and initial prioritization of strategies by the Committee, a community wide meeting was held in March 2022. The purpose of the meeting was to provide residents an opportunity to prioritize the proposed strategies for funding. The meeting was open to all Chelsea residents and was held in Spanish with English translation.

### Final Allocation Decisions

Following the community meeting, the Community Advisory Committee met to review the results of community ranking process, combine, and reframe strategies, and then select through voting two to three strategies per priority area. The Community Advisory Committee also decided on allocation of funds by priority area. Following the allocation of funds to the overarching priority areas, Advisory Committee members were asked to vote to distribute funds to individual strategies. The final strategies and allocated amounts are shown in the table below.

<b>Housing</b>	<b>Allocated Funding</b>
Increase equitable affordable and mixed income housing opportunities, including affordable housing (below 80% AMI) and workforce housing (between 80% AMI and 120% AMI), to meet the needs of the current community	\$2,218,487.39
Support housing stability initiatives and programs to prevent evictions and displacement	\$1,317,226.89
<b>Mental and Behavioral Health</b>	
Increase non-clinical mental and behavioral health services and delivery options, particularly for youth and including through a community center, while also addressing stigma for seeking services within the community	\$1,119,047.62
Increase clinical mental and behavioral health services, meeting people where they are, and addressing stigma within the community	\$652,777.78
Expand services for those experiencing domestic violence and barriers to seeking help	\$746,031.75
<b>Environmental Health</b>	
Increase the amount of open space, parks, and active outdoor spaces	\$589,285.71
Improve air quality by addressing pollution sources, mitigate indoor air quality issues in housing stock, and decrease noise pollution	\$696,428.57
<b>Food Security</b>	
Increase food pantry support and distribution mechanisms	\$1,011,904.76
Engage local, small businesses in food assistance and food distribution programs	\$910,714.29
Direct monetary assistance	\$809,523.81
<b>Small Business</b>	
Centralized support for small businesses at City Hall and through partners, including personalized guidance and training opportunities for small businesses	\$894,230.77
Support at-home daycare providers as small businesses	\$605,769.23
<b>Workforce Development</b>	
Support workforce development (career preparation, job search, support services, and training) for underserved Chelsea residents in fields that are in demand and lead to living wage jobs	\$2,244,155.84
Access and ability to use high-speed, quality broadband internet at prices people can afford	\$748,051.95
Portal for businesses to post local job opportunities	\$2,244,155.84
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$15,000,000</b>