

COUNTY OF
MARIN

COVID-19 Recovery Plan

Use of Local Fiscal Recovery Funds 2021 Report

Report date: August 31, 2021

Period covered: March 6, 2021 to August 7, 2021



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General Overview

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The County of Marin is scheduled to receive a total of \$50,273,916 in Federal stimulus funds through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), which may be expended on qualifying initiatives between March 6, 2021 and December 31, 2024.

The Board of Supervisors has identified the following as priority spending areas for approximately half of the ARPA funds received (approximately \$25m):

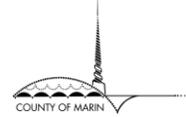
- Racial equity initiatives
- Climate change and sea level rise projects
- Permanent supportive housing
- Fire Department facility improvements
- City and Town partnerships to address homelessness and mental health
- Childcare and early education initiatives
- Enhanced funding for non-profit partners
- Emergency preparedness improvements

The County's focus in each of the priority areas outlined above will be to identify and target support in areas where the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated health, economic, social and education inequities. The County of Marin established a Racial Equity Action Plan in 2017, which has guided the development of many of the County's projects and policies to advance racial equity within the County. In 2020, the Board of Supervisors allocated \$2.7 million for racial equity initiatives and in 2021, the County convened an external race equity committee to guide future efforts.

While the County continues to make considerable progress toward creating a more diverse workforce and ensuring equity is a key element in governance and policy considerations, appropriating new ARPA funding towards these efforts will further enable the County to directly support more initiatives that benefit underserved Marin residents.

It is important to note that not only will County racial equity will be supported by ARPA funding as a standalone spending area but will be a key element of all other ARPA spending areas. For instance, the County's sea-level rise and climate change analysis shows that future risks are likely to disproportionately affect Marin County's predominately low-income neighborhoods. The Canal neighborhood, which is 89% Hispanic with a median household income of \$49,333, would be entirely underwater in a conservative 10-inch, near-term sea-level rise scenario. For reference, in Marin County a household of four earning less than \$91,350 is considered "very low income". Similarly, in the Santa Venetia community, where 27% of the population are people of color and the household income is in the low-to-moderate range, was shown to have the greatest risk to sea level rise in the near-term.

Additionally, the County is tracking the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on those both in risk of and currently experiencing homelessness and in need of permanent supportive housing. Due to Marin County's proximity to urban San Francisco, and the national upward pressure on the housing market due to low interest rates, Marin County has experienced a 34% increase in the



median home price from March 2020 to June 2021. This has significantly increased pressure on the County's limited affordable housing stock, putting some of our most vulnerable community members in acute need of more temporary and permanent shelter. Homelessness in Marin County is also an issue of racial equity as African American and Latinx residents are significantly overrepresented in the County's homeless population compared to the general population. In partnership with local organizations and our Cities and Towns, the County is planning to utilize ARPA funding to expand permanent supportive housing stock and services.

The remaining \$25m in ARPA funds will be utilized to support salary and benefit costs of County staff in the County's ongoing emergency response and economic recovery efforts. The County continues to devote considerable staffing resources in public safety departments as well as public health to support not only direct medical and testing needs but also ongoing inoculation and education efforts. While current numbers indicate 95% of Marin County's eligible population is vaccinated with at least one dose the County continues to experience a surge in cases from the Delta variant and therefore continues to focus first-responder resources on both vaccination efforts and providing medical care for COVID-19 patients.

In providing direct medical and emergency response services to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, the County will continue to direct public health resources to areas which have been most adversely impacted from the health and negative economic implications of the pandemic. Several regions within Marin County that are both among the most racially diverse, as well as low to extremely low-income, have experienced disproportionately high cases of COVID-19 and disproportionately low vaccine access and inoculation.

By partnering with organizations that directly serve these regions and devoting County staff to these efforts, the County has been able to successfully address these inequities by establishing testing and vaccine sites directly in the neighborhoods affected and implementing targeted rental assistance and income replacement programs.

Over the next four years, County public health staff will continue to work with our community partners to engage low-income and racially diverse residents in identifying the most pressing public health and economic recovery needs within our underserved communities. At the same time, COVID-19 response, mitigation and recovery will continue to be a dynamic situation and we expect priorities within those communities to evolve over time.

USES OF FUNDS

ARPA funds will be used in two general categories:

1. Furthering key strategic initiatives identified by the Board of Supervisors including advancing racial equity initiatives, mitigating climate change and sea level rise impacts, increasing permanent supportive housing options, improving Fire Department facilities, and partnering with Cities, Towns, childcare providers and non-profit organizations to enhance supportive services throughout the community; and
2. The County's ongoing public health emergency response to serve our community during the pandemic.

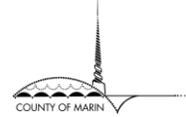
The key strategic initiatives currently identified by the Board of Supervisors in the first category (approximately \$25m) are broadly defined spending areas that are in alignment with both existing Countywide goals that reflect the Marin's highest priorities and with data-driven practices to advance racial, socioeconomic and equity within a community.

With the support of the County Administrator's Office and Health and Human Services communications staff, the Board of Supervisors plans to undertake a robust public process over the next year to appropriate specific spending proposals of ARPA funds within each of the areas identified. The County has created the website www.marincounty.org/COVIDrecovery to maintain resources and communications on how ARPA funds are being utilized to support the community. The County also plans to implement a cross-jurisdictional approach with the 11 incorporated Cities and Towns within Marin County to promote workshops, surveys and other public communications related to the County's planned use of ARPA funds for strategic initiatives.

To ensure the region's underserved communities play an active part of the public planning process, the County will partner with non-profit agencies that directly serve Marin's historically low-income and racially diverse neighborhoods. Two of the most populous of these areas are the Canal neighborhood in San Rafael and Marin City in unincorporated southern Marin. Both regions have significantly lower household incomes than surrounding neighborhoods. Marin City, represented by Census Tract 1290, has a median household income of \$38,950, compared to its neighboring Census Tracts (1281 and 1302.02) with median household incomes of \$160,417 and \$105,913 respectively. The Canal neighborhood (Census Tract 1122.01) has a median household income of \$49,333. The median household income for Marin County as a whole is \$110,843. The Canal neighborhood is 89% Hispanic, and the Marin City neighborhood is 23% Black. Marin County as a whole is 16% Hispanic and 3% Black.

Public information in the Canal neighborhood will be made available in Spanish and Vietnamese, as is currently the practice with the County's ongoing communications. The County will also ensure that outreach to all communities is not limited to digital form only: computer and online access can be a limiting factor is reaching individuals of all income levels.

The second major category of funds (also approximately \$25m) will be used towards continuing support of the County's ongoing public health response to COVID-19. Staff in the County's Public Health Division are wholly or primarily devoted to addressing the public health impacts of COVID-19 pandemic. Other divisions within Marin Health and Human Services are also primarily devoted to mitigating the long-term impacts of the pandemic, including Behavioral Health, Social Services, and Homelessness programs. The County also has staff in the



Emergency Operations Center, the Fire Department and Public Works that are devoting a majority of their time to pandemic response and mitigation efforts.

The Marin County Sheriff's Office Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has been fully activated since March 2020 to coordinate Countywide operations for the pandemic and support the public health response. The EOC, staffed with full-time County Disaster Services Workers, has expanded their footprint and coordinated important efforts such as the development of a call center to coordinate the response to community questions and the conversion of the County's 22,500 sq ft Exhibit Hall to both a drive-through testing site as well as vaccine clinic with a capacity to serve hundreds of residents per day. Prior to the pandemic, the Exhibit Hall was also used for regional evacuation efforts related to wildfires and public safety power shut offs. Facilities of this nature will continue to be integral to the County's emergency response efforts and we will utilize ARPA funds to improve County infrastructure in preparation for future disasters.

Finally, the County will utilize ARPA funding to invest in data systems and county facilities that support emergency response capacity, improve healthcare coordination, facilitate social distancing measures and enhance ventilation in congregate settings.

PROMOTING EQUITABLE OUTCOMES

While Marin's statistics as a whole may reflect both a wealthy and healthy community, there exist vast income and social inequities across regions in Marin. In the 2021 County Health Rankings & Roadmaps report, Marin County was ranked No. 1 in health factors and health outcomes among California's 58 counties for the 11th time in 12 years. However, the same report acknowledged that Marin has one of the lowest scores in income inequality and housing affordability. The racial disparities in health in Marin are also significant. For instance, Black residents are 2.4 times more likely to experience premature death in Marin than White residents, and while 22% of Marin's Hispanic children are in poverty, only 2% of White children are.

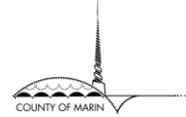
The disparity has extended to COVID-19 infections. The latest County data shows that while Latinx residents comprise 16% of the County's population, they have accounted for 49% of total COVID-19 infections. Marin's White residents however, accounting for 71% of the County's population, have accounted for only 37% of cases countywide .

The pandemic job losses and subsequent economic recovery has also not been equitable in Marin. The negative economic impacts of the virus have disproportionately impacted low-income, non-White communities in Marin County. The first six months of the virus saw a sharp 45% decline in jobs in the lower-wage sectors such as tourism, travel, leisure and hospitality . While most of the service sector jobs lost had returned by mid-2021, many low-wage earners in those sectors lost real income and skill growth opportunities over an extended period of time during which they were unable to work. While documented residents were mostly able to successfully access unemployment benefits; undocumented residents, which comprise an estimated 15,000 or 6% of Marin's population , were unable to claim any federal or continuous unemployment benefits during the pandemic.

To date, the County's two-pronged approach to supporting economic recovery for low-income residents has been to both ramp up eligibility office operations and to create direct financial payment to individuals in economic hardship. The Human Services Divisions of the Health and Human Services Department including Employment Services and Benefit Offices have added staffing and expanded hours to assist more residents in claiming benefits they are eligible for including unemployment, disability, housing vouchers and SNAP food stamps. The County also developed and implemented an Emergency Rental Assistance Program to assist both low-income residents and landlords, and utility agencies with grants to provide direct payment of unpaid rent and/or utilities from April 2020-December 2021.

The County is aware that beyond the health and employment implications of the COVID-19 pandemic, low-income children in Marin are at a much greater risk of falling behind academically due to the nearly 18 months of remote instruction. Part of Marin's economic recovery from the pandemic has included implementing programs to support students with limited at-home schooling support and/or internet access.

A major project that the County undertook during the pandemic was the installation of a neighborhood-wide, free Wi-Fi network in the very low-income and predominately Hispanic Canal neighborhood. Prior to the installation of the free Wi-Fi network, nearly half (44%) of Canal residents reported difficulties connecting to the internet. This made remote learning



exceedingly difficult if not impossible for the 3,400 school-age children living within the 0.1 square mile Canal neighborhood .

Additionally, the Marin County Free Library undertook several major pandemic remote initiatives to support low-income students. The predominately low-income-serving Marin City library branch distributed free Wi-Fi network hot-spots and Chromebooks to students while students at the local elementary school and organized both English and Spanish book give-away events at the South Novato Library, which serves a large Spanish-speaking population. To directly support the County's front-line staff during the pandemic including first responders and essential workers, Library employees staffed childcare and learning centers for children who were otherwise unable to get childcare while schools remained closed.

Finally, a major focus of the County's equity focus in its COVID response to date has been addressing the increase in individuals experiencing homelessness in Marin. African American and Latinx people are significantly overrepresented in Marin County's homeless population compared to the general population. Staff has been added to the Health and Human Services Department that are devoted to addressing homelessness and the disparate impacts from the pandemic. The County has recently succeeded in efforts to secure additional permanent supportive housing and temporary shelter beds and has refined the County's Coordinated Entry program. The program ensures all individuals experiencing homelessness have a default point of entry for accessing social services and prioritizes racial equity and medical vulnerability in securing housing placements.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Successful community outreach and engagement has been critical in Marin's public health response in building trust in underserved communities to increase testing, quarantining and vaccination. The Canal neighborhood experienced soaring COVID-19 transmissions and infections throughout 2020 due to the high population density and that many residents experienced higher levels of exposure since they lacked the ability to work remotely in service-sector jobs.

In response, the Public Health Department, in partnership with the County Emergency Operations Center deployed on-site resources for Canal residents not limited to testing and vaccination clinics, but inclusive of food bank distribution and eligibility workers ready to assist area residents with unemployment benefit claims and apply for other financial assistance.

Additionally, when infections began to pick up in spring 2020 the County launched a visual-forward mask campaign entirely in Spanish and Vietnamese. Posters were distributed to more than 100 stores and on 50 area buses. Once vaccines became available, County Public Health partnered with the regional healthcare providers to target vaccine supply and distribution within the Canal. In alignment with the State's equity guidance to prioritize vaccines to communities hit-hardest from COVID-19 infections, County Public Health directed vaccines to Canal residents as they became available to the County as a whole.

The County plans to undertake a robust community engagement process over the next year to determine how the funds will be allocated within the eight identified priority spending areas. One of the most effective methods of reaching Marin's underserved communities during the policy making process has been through engaging with community-based organizations that directly serve them. The County's messaging is most effectively received in a trust-building way when it is delivered in partnership with local CBO's, senior-serving organizations, religious groups, and news outlets the community is already familiar with.

To this end, the County will continue partnering with local organizations for outreach, public education and engagement to ensure ARPA funds will maximize the short and long-term support of these communities.



LABOR PRACTICES

The County of Marin is committed to long term relationships with our labor partners. We will continue to explore how to best implement stronger policies to ensure that infrastructure projects deliver highly trained local jobs at a sustainable wage. In accordance with California Law, the County will continue to require prevailing wages with all large projects as part of our existing Procurement Policy.

USE OF EVIDENCE

While the County is not proposing to utilize SLFRF funds for evidence-based interventions nor evaluate projects through rigorous program evaluations that are designed to build evidence at this time, we continue to work with departments to improve data-driven decision making that is focused on improved outcomes for the community. In particular, the Health and Human Services developed a 'Strategic Plan to Achieve Health and Wellness Equity' that is the overarching vision of the department and includes a commitment to using data to evaluate program effectiveness over time.



TABLE OF EXPENSES BY EXPENDITURE CATEGORY

Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
1	Expenditure Category: Public Health		
1.1	COVID-19 Vaccination		
1.2	COVID-19 Testing		
1.3	COVID-19 Contact Tracing		
1.4	Prevention in Congregate Settings (Nursing Homes, Prisons/Jails, Dense Work Sites, Schools, etc.)		
1.5	Personal Protective Equipment		
1.6	Medical Expenses (including Alternative Care Facilities)		
1.7	Capital Investments or Physical Plant Changes to Public Facilities that respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency		
1.8	Other COVID-19 Public Health Expenses (including Communications, Enforcement, Isolation/Quarantine)		
1.9	Payroll Costs for Public Health, Safety, and Other Public Sector Staff Responding to COVID-19	\$14,114,627	\$14,114,627
1.10	Mental Health Services		
1.11	Substance Use Services		
1.12	Other Public Health Services		
2	Expenditure Category: Negative Economic Impacts		
2.1	Household Assistance: Food Programs		
2.2	Household Assistance: Rent, Mortgage, and Utility Aid		
2.3	Household Assistance: Cash Transfers		
2.4	Household Assistance: Internet Access Programs		
2.5	Household Assistance: Eviction Prevention		
2.6	Unemployment Benefits or Cash Assistance to Unemployed Workers		
2.7	Job Training Assistance (e.g., Sectoral job-training, Subsidized Employment, Employment Supports or Incentives)		
2.8	Contributions to UI Trust Funds*		
2.9	Small Business Economic Assistance (General)		
2.10	Aid to nonprofit organizations		
2.11	Aid to Tourism, Travel, or Hospitality		

Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
2.12	Aid to Other Impacted Industries		
2.13	Other Economic Support		
2.14	Rehiring Public Sector Staff		
3	Expenditure Category: Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities		
3.1	Education Assistance: Early Learning		
3.2	Education Assistance: Aid to High-Poverty Districts		
3.3	Education Assistance: Academic Services		
3.4	Education Assistance: Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Services		
3.5	Education Assistance: Other		
3.6	Healthy Childhood Environments: Child Care		
3.7	Healthy Childhood Environments: Home Visiting		
3.8	Healthy Childhood Environments: Services to Foster Youth or Families Involved in Child Welfare System		
3.9.	Healthy Childhood Environments: Other		
3.10	Housing Support: Affordable Housing		
3.11	Housing Support: Services for Unhoused persons		
3.12	Housing Support: Other Housing Assistance		
3.13	Social Determinants of Health: Other		
3.14	Social Determinants of Health: Community Health Workers or Benefits Navigators		
3.15	Social Determinants of Health: Lead Remediation		
3.16	Social Determinants of Health: Community Violence Interventions		
4	Expenditure Category: Premium Pay		
4.1	Public Sector Employees		
4.2	Private Sector: Grants to other employers		
5	Expenditure Category: Infrastructure		
5.1	Clean Water: Centralized wastewater treatment		
5.2	Clean Water: Centralized wastewater collection and conveyance		
5.3	Clean Water: Decentralized wastewater		
5.4	Clean Water: Combined sewer overflows		
5.5	Clean Water: Other sewer infrastructure		
5.6	Clean Water: Stormwater		
5.7	Clean Water: Energy conservation		
5.8	Clean Water: Water conservation		

Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
5.9	Clean Water: Nonpoint source		
5.10	Drinking water: Treatment		
5.11	Drinking water: Transmission & distribution		
5.12	Drinking water: Transmission & distribution: lead remediation		
5.13	Drinking water: Source		
5.14	Drinking water: Storage		
5.15	Drinking water: Other water infrastructure		
5.16	Broadband: "Last Mile" projects		
5.17	Broadband: Other projects		
6	Expenditure Category: Revenue Replacement		
6.1	Provision of Government Services		
7	Administrative and Other		
7.1	Administrative Expenses		
7.2	Evaluation and data analysis		
7.3	Transfers to Other Units of Government		
7.4	Transfers to Nonentitlement Units (States and Territories only)		

Project Inventory

PROJECTS

Project name: *County of Marin Public Health Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic*

Project 1: Public Health Response

Funding amount: \$25,000,000

Project Expenditure Category: 1.9, Payroll Costs for Public Health, Safety, and Other Public Sector Staff Responding to COVID-19

Project overview

- Payroll expenditures for the ongoing staff operations of the Public Health Division of the Health and Human Services Department
- Payroll expenditures for ongoing and enhanced staffing in divisions that are primarily dedicated on mitigating the pandemic's impacts, including Behavioral Health, Social Services and Homelessness
- Testing and vaccine administration operations
- Improvements to data systems and county facilities
- Tracking and publishing of public health data
- Public information, guidance and resources for residents, businesses and schools
- www.coronavirus.marinhhs.org

Use of Evidence

- The overarching goal of the County's Public Health response is to reduce the infection and transmission of COVID-19 within the community, especially within medically vulnerable populations.
- The chief, evidence-based tool to prevent COVID-19 transmission within the community has been widescale inoculation. To that end, Marin Public Health continues to promote and strive for increased vaccination rates among the eligible population. Currently 95.2% of Marin's population 12 and over have received at least one dose, and 88% have been fully vaccinated.
- To ensure that all communities within Marin are receiving equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines and testing, Marin Public Health continues to operate vaccine clinics and testing sites directly in the County's two lowest income neighborhoods: the Canal and Marin City.
- The majority of funds in this project (\$25,000,000) are being utilized in category EC 1 (Public Health)



Additional Projects

Additional projects for the remaining approximately \$25m in funds within the priority spending areas will be identified once the County completes its public outreach process during the 2021-22 Fiscal Year.

County priority spending areas for ARPA funds:

- Racial equity initiatives
- Climate change and sea level rise
- Permanent supportive housing
- Fire Department facility improvements
- City and Town partnerships to address homelessness and mental health
- Childcare and early education
- Non-profit partnerships
- Emergency preparedness projects

PERFORMANCE REPORT

Project name: County of Marin Public Health Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Performance indicators:

1. Persons enrolled in CalFresh ([CDSS](#))
2. CalWORKS caseload ([CDSS](#))
3. Percent of eligible residents vaccinated ([Marin HHS](#))
4. Comparison of % of eligible non-White residents vaccinated rates compared with % of non-White residents in population as a whole ([Marin HHS](#))
 - Asian
 - Black or African-American
 - Hispanic or Latinx
5. New permanent supportive housing units (Marin County)