



**Date:** September 19, 2022

**Project:** Updated ARPA Project List and Funding

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends approving the updated list of projects and funding for the City's American Rescue Plan Act grant. The updated list reflects actual spending and contracts approved to date, consolidation of construction funds to reduce costs, and new opportunities for improving services to residents.

**Background:** The recommended changes fall into four categories. First, as a result of the City's focus to prioritize the immediate needs in the community, the projects related to food distribution, tutoring, and small business grants have been adjusted to reflect contracts and actual expenses. And because Cobb County had set aside \$47M for assistance to renters to pay for utilities and rent, funding a similar project with local funds is unnecessary.

Secondly, regarding the ARPA-supported construction projects, staff is recommending consolidating federal grant money into fewer projects to save on costs of federal mandates. Construction work funded with federal grant money carries increased costs due to a number of added requirements, most notably the Davis-Bacon Act. The updated list shifts the federal grant funds from the City Hall project and Park Improvements project to the Downtown Parking Improvements project, and in return SPLOST funds from the Downtown Parking Improvements project will shift to the other projects. This consolidation will keep project funding totals the same but will save the City considerable expense when bidding the City Hall and parks projects.

Third, staff recommends additional small investments to improve public services. The updated list includes a project to expand an existing Cobb County program that provides a trained mental health clinician who responds with police to calls that have a mental health component. The list also includes funding to facilitate improved communications with citizens. The added project would fund a web-based tool staff can use to perform surveys and engage with local residents to get feedback on various proposals and issues.

Finally, a contingency line was added and the proposed funding was increased to reflect the entire amount of the ARPA grant.

Staff recommends approval of the attached updated list of projects.

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