



**HARRISONBURG | VA**  
**FRIENDLY BY NATURE**



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## **Community asked to prioritize needs in second phase of ARPA engagement** *Survey, pop-up events to seek additional input in vital program*

HARRISONBURG, Va. – Following an initial public engagement period that saw more than 2,000 individuals provide their input on how Harrisonburg City Council should use American Rescue Plan Act funds to improve our community, people now have the opportunity to prioritize the most critical needs in The Friendly City.

A survey in English and Spanish is currently available at [www.Harrisonburgva.gov/ARPA](http://www.Harrisonburgva.gov/ARPA) asking the community to rank what needs they feel are most crucial for City Council to address. These needs, identified earlier this year through community meetings, small group discussions and a public survey led by James Madison University's Institute for Constructive Advocacy and Dialogue, are categorized into the following subject areas:

- **Increasing safe, accessible, and sustainable housing**
  - This includes needs like ensuring more rental housing, more affordable housing for purchase, energy efficiency incentives, and sheltering the homeless.
- **Expanding and enhancing public spaces**
  - This includes needs like expanding and enhancing arts and cultural spaces, public parks, greenways, community recreation centers and pools, and centralizing community information.
- **Upgrading neighborhood livability and sustainability**
  - This includes needs like upgrading and expanding sidewalks, improving roads and bike lanes, managing flooding, increasing Wifi access, and beautifying neighborhoods
- **Improving community mental and physical health**
  - This includes needs like substance abuse help, mental health treatment, health clinics, food access, and support for seniors and those with disabilities.
- **Strengthening support for K-12 students**
  - This includes needs like school buildings, student mental health, tutoring, and summer and before/after school programs.
- **Supporting our workers and working families**
  - This includes needs like competitive and living wages, job training, affordable and quality childcare, and incentivizing businesses
- **Building capacity of City government and its services**
  - This includes needs like fully staffing safety personnel and departments, water and sewer improvements, sustainability of city property, and offering services in multiple languages.
- **Improving how we get around**
  - This includes needs like public transportation, bike lanes, creating a network of usable sidewalks, and electrical vehicle charging stations

After identifying the top areas of need, participants will then be allowed to rank funding priorities in their top two categories.

“Throughout this process, we have heard our community describe the biggest needs they and their families are experiencing in our city,” Mayor Deanna Reed said. “My colleagues and I are eager to move forward on addressing many of these issues our community has identified, but to do so we need people to speak up and help us recognize the best, most impactful steps we should take to benefit as many people as possible.”



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## **AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT**

In addition to the public survey, pop-up engagement opportunities will take place across the city at local parks and other locations the community gathers. Attendees will be able to engage with City staff about the ARPA program and take the survey.

The results of the survey and pop-up events will be presented to City Council in June for additional conversations.

**The City of Harrisonburg** is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to 51,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is online at [www.HarrisonburgVA.gov](http://www.HarrisonburgVA.gov).



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