



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

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Contact:

Phil Pitchford

Public Information Officer

951-826-5975

ppitchford@riversideca.gov

Millions in Parks and Recreation Improvements, New Trash Trucks and Other Projects Coming to Riverside Via Federal ARPA Funds

City Council approves spending plan for money from American Rescue Plan Act

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – About \$13 million worth of parks and recreation improvements, \$4 million in new trash trucks to replace an aging fleet and a host of other projects across Riverside were included in a spending plan approved unanimously by the City Council Tuesday (2/7) for funds from the federal American Rescue Plan Act.

The decision dealt with how to spend \$36.7 million in the second batch of funds made available to the City from ARPA, the \$350 billion COVID recovery effort signed by President Biden almost two years ago. A previous \$36.7 million installment of local ARPA spending was approved by the City Council in November 2021.

“Parks make life better! These projects will improve the playgrounds and community centers that make our parks such enjoyable places,” Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson said. “Other ARPA-funded projects will make Riverside safer, strengthen our finances and improve our quality of life.”

Parks projects included in the most recent allocation of ARPA money include \$3 million for a gymnasium construction project at Bordwell Park; and \$10 million for playground resurfacing, replacing playground equipment, repairs to the heating and air conditioning systems at parks buildings, parking lot repairs, and replacing floors in community centers across the city.

The allocation comes a few months after residents expressed concerns about the condition of city parks in the most recent Quality of Life survey.

Other uses for the funds include \$170,000 in new equipment for the Riverside Police Department; \$600,000 in improvements to the Fire Department’s Emergency Operations Center; recovery of revenue that was lost during the pandemic due to \$2 million in unpaid refuse bills and other costs, as well as \$1.5 million worth of lost parking garage fees; \$600,000 for library materials; \$1.4 million for an affordable housing fund; and \$185,000 for a two-year pilot program to support artists in creating public art projects.

The \$600,000 ARPA allocation will move Riverside into the top 10 of city libraries in California, tripling the City's current annual spending. The Riverside Public Library currently spends just over \$300,000 per year (in large part due to generous donations) on books and other materials resulting in a statewide ranking of 45th as noted by the 2020/2021 California State Library Annual Report. The ARPA allocation will be deployed at all libraries throughout the City and will go to new books, audiobooks, ebooks and other resources geared for early learners, K-12 students, adult education and career testing materials, small business collections and life-long learners.

“From public art to affordable housing funds, this plan has something for every part of our community,” Mayor Pro Tem Clarissa Cervantes said. “Our choices in how to spend these federal dollars reflect the investments we are making into our neighborhoods and our values.”

More information about the spending plan, including details about which projects are funded, can be found by clicking [here](#) and examining the documents under item 14.