



JOHNSON COUNTY
Stabilize. Strategize. Organize.

American Rescue Plan Act

LOCAL FISCAL RECOVERY FUND



Meeting in a Box

Please return your completed materials by:

October 15, 2021

Background and Context

The Board of Supervisors is taking necessary steps to ensure Johnson County acts swiftly, responsibly, and equitably in the administration of our \$29.3M ARPA Local Fiscal Recovery Fund allocation. Planning and implementation will reflect the importance of public input, transparency, and accountability. This process involves engagement with residents, County departments and offices, surrounding public entities, and community stakeholders.

It is the mission of the Johnson County Board of Supervisors to enhance the quality of life of residents by providing exceptional public services in a collaborative, responsive, and fiscally accountable manner. True to our mission, the Board will take a three-pronged approach to investing Johnson County's ARPA Local Fiscal Recovery Funding:



STABILIZE OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH EQUITY- FOCUSED RESPONSE

- Replace County budget deficits incurred as a result of COVID-19 closures and pandemic-related economic slowdown.
- Respond to economic harms to workers, families, small businesses, impacted industries, and the public sector.
- Prioritize short-term investments with lasting impacts.
- Move quickly to stimulate recovery.



STRATEGIZE TOGETHER TO INVEST IN FUTURE PROSPERITY

- ARPA allows local governments to invest in infrastructure and launch programs to support economic recovery and growth, with additional flexibility for the hardest-hit communities and families.
- Immediacy
 - Inclusivity
 - Future Prosperity
 - Complementarity



ORGANIZE OUR RESOURCES TO ENSURE INCLUSIVE RECOVERY

- Build a collaborative team for effective and equitable deployment of funds.
- Explore Joint Entity committee for strategic investments and impact monitoring to avoid duplicated efforts.
- Conduct a series of public input sessions in varying formats to meet the people where they are.

The Process: What is happening now?

Johnson County invites feedback from residents, households, workers, businesses, and impacted industries on how to invest \$29.3m in recovery and resiliency to the COVID-19 pandemic. Feedback is being collected in numerous ways, including: facilitated public input sessions at locations throughout the county, online and print surveys, and comments received directly from individuals and groups. The public can provide feedback in numerous ways.

How can funding be used?



Support Public Health Response

Fund COVID-19 mitigation efforts



Equity-Focused Services

Address health and educational disparities, invest in housing, and promote healthy childhood environments.



Premium Pay for Essential Workers

Essential work is defined as regular in-person interactions or regular physical handling of items that are also handled by others. An individual who teleworked from a residence may not receive premium pay.



Address Negative Economic Impacts

Respond to economic harms to workers, families, small businesses, and the public sector.



Broadband Infrastructure

Provide unserved or underserved locations with new or expanded broadband access.



Water and Sewer Infrastructure

Improve access to clean drinking water and invest in wastewater and stormwater infrastructure.

Essential Worker: A worker that has regular in-person interactions or regular physical handling of items that were also handled by others. Does not include work performed via telework from a residence.

Impacted Industry: Industries such as tourism, travel, and hospitality that were disproportionately impacted by closures to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

How will community voices be heard in this process?

Understanding the needs within the county will take community input. It also means making new connections to the community and building trust. As part of this process, the County is reaching out to work with the community, to have conversations from a variety of perspectives.

The Meeting in a Box tool is intended to support any group in Johnson County that wants to contribute to this conversation and provide input.

The U.S. Treasury emphasizes the importance of public input, accountability, and transparency in the implementation of Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. Johnson County is gathering community feedback through public input sessions, surveys, targeted outreach, and public meetings. These efforts will inform decision making and support data-driven initiatives.



What is Meeting in a Box?

The purpose of a Meeting in a Box is to generate conversation and feedback from the community about the needs and priorities for an inclusive economic recovery in Johnson County. Anyone can host or facilitate a meeting — from an informal group of friends to a regularly-scheduled meeting of a community organization. The Meeting in a Box provides a guide for the conversation, but the host can change or adapt the approach as needed to best fit the needs of the group.



What's in the Box?

The Meeting in a Box includes:

- Meeting in a Box Guidebook
- ARPA Local Fiscal Recovery Fund information
- Worksheets for discussion
- Sign-in sheet and evaluation forms

This package includes a series of worksheets to be used during the meetings. Copies can be made for distribution to attendees. It also includes supporting materials to provide context and background for the discussion. These can be made available to people in advance to review. It may be helpful to share materials for review prior to the discussion.



Interested in Hosting a Meeting?

For questions or to pick up a Meeting in a Box, contact:

Rose Schroder, Senior Urban Planner
Bolton & Menk, Inc.
430 E Grand Avenue, Suite 101
Des Moines, IA 50309
rose.schroder@bolton-menk.com



Materials are also available online at: [JohnsonCountyIowa.gov/arpa](https://www.johnsoncountyiowa.gov/arpa).

To ensure that your group's feedback is incorporated into the initial public input report to the Board of Supervisors, please return completed worksheets and forms by: **October 15, 2021**

What will the County do with the Information?

The County will utilize this feedback gained from the Meeting in the Box engagement as consideration during the process of prioritizing and considering how to allocate and spend funds. Results will be included in a final report summarizing all input received from the greater public engagement process.



Learn more on the project website:
www.johnsoncountyiowa.gov/arpa
Thank you for your participation!

Meeting in a Box Guide

The following information contains suggested guidelines. The meeting facilitator can change or adapt anything to better meet the group's needs such as:

- Questions can be skipped or reworded, but please record what you changed.
- Responses to questions can be individual or collective.
- Meetings in a Box can be easily adapted for virtual participation via Zoom or similar remote technology
- Please designate one person to record or collect responses and return to the consultant on page 3.



Before the Meeting Starts

1. Review the provided resource materials.
2. Set a meeting date, time, and location and invite your participants.
3. While not required, you may wish to share background materials in advance for people to review. These materials are available online at www.johnsoncountyiowa.gov/arpa.
4. Two days before the meeting: Send reminder to invitees.
5. Day of the meeting: Set up the space for comfortable group conversation such as around a table.

Your Role as Facilitator

1. Guiding questions are provided, but you may focus on what seems most relevant to the group. If you rephrase or create your own question, please make note if the change on the worksheet.
2. Feel free to provide worksheets to attendees so they can follow along and take their own notes.
3. Your role is to guide group discussion, record the group's responses, and return completed responses to the consultant at the email address on page 3.
4. Consider designating a note taker to help record information from conversations.
5. Welcome all ideas and help everyone feel part of the process. The goal is to ensure everyone has an opportunity to be heard.
6. Encourage the group to come up with answers together while respecting different viewpoints.
7. Keep the discussion moving.



Please return your group's completed worksheets and forms to the Meeting in a Box contact by:



October 15, 2021

Start the Meeting

Timing and Format

The estimated time for the meeting is 1.5 hours, but this can vary at the host's discretion, such as asking attendees to review materials in advance. Suggested times for each part are included, but may vary depending on which topics generate the most conversation.



The meeting format should allow for informal group discussion whether virtual or in-person. If you have a large group (10+ people), it may make sense to split into smaller subgroups of 3 to 5 people so that individuals have more opportunity to talk. It's important that each group has a "Recorder of Comments" for reporting back to the larger group.

Welcome and Discuss Ground Rules (5 minutes)

Purpose: Welcome everyone and set basic courtesy rules for group. The host can set rules or ask the group to come up with them. Suggested rules:

1. One speaker at a time.
2. Everyone should have a chance to be heard.
3. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers
4. This is a safe space to share ideas.

Introductions (15 minutes)

Purpose: Allow people to meet and give everyone a chance to bring their voice into the room.

1. Ask attendees to introduce themselves (unless everyone already knows each other). You may also have them answer a question with their introduction such as: What do you like most about Johnson County?
2. Provide a brief overview of the project and the purpose of the meeting. A brief summary is provided below — please revise or build upon this to make it best fit your group.



The purpose of this meeting is to collect feedback from community stakeholders about COVID-19 related impacts, opportunities for inclusive recovery and future resiliency. The needs should consider the uses that are already allowed by the funding sources discussed previously in the meeting materials.

Goals include:

- **Stabilize** –
 - Respond to economic harms to workers, families, small businesses, impacted industries, and the public sector.
 - Prioritize short-term investments with lasting impacts.
 - Move quickly to stimulate recovery.
- **Strategize** – ARPA allows local governments to invest in infrastructure and launch programs to support economic recovery and growth, with additional flexibility for the hardest-hit communities and families.
 - **Immediacy:** Funding decisions support urgent COVID-19 response efforts, including public health and economic stabilization for households and businesses.
 - **Inclusivity:** Funding objectives address systemic public health and economic challenges that contributed to more severe impacts of the pandemic among low-income communities and people of color.
 - **Future prosperity:** Investments lay the foundation for a strong and equitable recovery by prioritizing long-term inclusive economic growth over brief stimulus spending.
 - **Complementarity:** Investments advance Johnson County's priorities outlined in the strategic plan, comprehensive plan, and forthcoming economic development plan.
- **Organize** –
 - Build a collaborative team for effective and equitable deployment of funds.
 - Explore Joint Entry committee for strategic investments and impact monitoring to avoid duplicated efforts.
 - Conduct a series of public input sessions in varying formats to meet the people where they are.

Let's begin!

Worksheet: Discussion Questions

1. What kind of economic impacts did your household experience as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

2. How can community-wide COVID-19 response be better supported? For example: technical assistance, services to help connect people to programs, expanded public messaging.

3. What would an equitable recovery look like? What systemic challenges can this funding be used to address?

4. What barriers to support services exist? How can they be reduced? What programs and/or projects have been effective to date?

5. What type(s) of housing programs could you or your community benefit from as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

- ☐ Housing with supportive services for people experiencing homelessness or with disabilities.
- ☐ Development of affordable housing
- ☐ Housing vouchers for rent assistance
- ☐ Assistance relocating to neighborhoods with higher levels of economic opportunity
- ☐ Housing rehabilitation assistance including things like lead abatement or improvements for people with mobility limitations.
- ☐ Other _____

6. What types of childcare could you or your community benefit from? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Assistance with the cost of childcare
- ☐ Early childhood learning centers
- ☐ Home tutoring programs
- ☐ Enhanced services for child welfare-involved families
- ☐ All of the above
- ☐ None of the above

7. What types of services for aging adults could you or your community benefit from?

8. What types of public transportation services could benefit you or your community?

9. What types of broadband or internet services could benefit you and your community? (availability, speed, reliability, cost)

10. What type of water or sewer infrastructure could benefit you or your community? Does your community need investment in a rural water system or wastewater infrastructure to expand services for development or for water quality purposes?

- ☐ Flood resiliency
- ☐ Water quality improvement
- ☐ Rural water access or infrastructure
- ☐ Preserving or improving soil and water quality of public land or recreation space

11. What types of violence prevention programs could benefit your community? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Summer programming for youth
- ☐ Job training programs
- ☐ Reentry programs for people returning from incarceration
- ☐ Community outreach and mentorship programs
- ☐ Trauma-informed care
- ☐ Other:

Worksheet: Allowable Use Rating

Purpose: Explore the needs that are important to attendees, as they relate to the allowable uses of available ARPA Local Fiscal Recovery funding.

Facilitator Note: This can be done individually, as a group discussion, or both.

Rate the importance of each category of allowable uses based on your meeting discussion today. A rating of 1 is less important and a rating of 5 is the most important.

The ARPA Local Fiscal Recovery Act identifies six categories of allowable uses. Rate each value from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important).



Support Public Health Response: Fund COVID-19 mitigation efforts.

1 2 3 4 5



Equity-Focused Services: Address health and educational disparities, invest in housing, and promote healthy childhood environments.

1 2 3 4 5



Premium Pay for Essential Workers: Premium pay goes to employees, not employer/individual.

1 2 3 4 5



Address Negative Economic Impacts: Respond to economic harms to workers, families, small businesses, and the public sector.

1 2 3 4 5



Broadband Infrastructure: Provide unserved or underserved locations with new or expanded broadband access.

1 2 3 4 5



Water and Sewer Infrastructure: Improve access to clean drinking water and invest in wastewater and stormwater infrastructure.

1 2 3 4 5

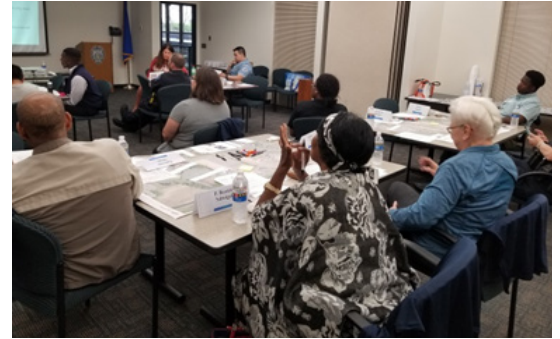
General Comments:

Wrap Up and Evaluation (15 minutes)

Purpose: To reflect on the meeting format and the biggest takeaways from this discussion. These can come from what has already been identified or be something brand new and unique.

Facilitator Note: At the end of the meeting, we request you ask attendees to identify their place of residence and how they identify as a stakeholder in Johnson County. This can be done with the included forms.

Materials Needed: Participant form copies



1. What big idea or insight did you have during the discussion? (*Go around group for each person's response.*)
2. What worked well about this discussion? What could have been better?
3. How would you like to be engaged in the future regarding this project?
4. Please fill out a participant form. (*Hand out forms.*)
5. Collect the worksheet responses, meeting evaluation form, meeting note sheets, sign-in sheet and the participant forms and return them to :

Meeting Notes

Use this space to record notes from group conversations.
Use additional paper if needed.



Meeting Evaluation (to be completed by facilitator)

1. How many people participated?

2. How useful did you find these materials for facilitating discussion on the ARPA Local Fiscal Recovery Funding?

____ Not useful

____ Just OK

____ Useful

____ Excellent

3. Did you find the materials easy to understand and use? Please mark your answer on the scale below.

____ Poor

____ Confusing

____ Just OK

____ Useful

____ Excellent

4. Would you host this sort of event again?

YES

NO

5. Would you recommend it to others?

YES

NO

6. Any other comments you'd like to share including, any unresolved issues?

Sign-in Sheet

We will not share or use your contact information for any other purpose.

Name	City	Email

Participant Form

The purpose of this form is to understand the participants of the process.

Age: _____

Where do you live in Johnson County?:

____ Coralville

____ Shueyville

____ Hills

____ Solon

____ Iowa City

____ Swisher

____ Lone Tree

____ Tiffin

____ North Liberty

____ University Heights

____ Oxford

____ Unincorporated Johnson County

Do you identify as:

____ An essential worker

____ Small business owner/manager

____ Someone who teleworked

____ More than one of the above

____ None of the above

Gender:

____ Female

____ Male

____ Nonbinary/third gender

____ Prefer to self-describe: _____

Please check all that apply

____ American Indian or Alaskan Native

____ Asian or Pacific Islander

____ Black or African American

____ Hispanic or Latino/a

____ Multi-racial

____ White or European American

____ Other. Please specify: _____