

# THE ARP TOOLKIT AT A GLANCE

Southern Economic Advancement Project ARP October 2021 Highlights

The American Rescue Plan (ARP) includes an unprecedented level of federal support for U.S. communities, and significant local recovery funds are arriving in cities and counties across the country. Most regions are receiving funds equal to roughly \$300 per resident. **Do your residents and leaders know this opportunity is here? Is your community participating in the dialogue about how best to invest these funds?**

Our Southern Economic Advancement Project (SEAP) ARP Assistance team collects and shares vital information in our [ARP Toolkit](#). We're working to ensure local leaders are informed about ARP and have access to great examples of how to use these dollars to produce a more sustainable and equitable recovery.



## New Orleans Council Adopts SEAP's ARP Resolution, Confirming Equitable Spending Goals

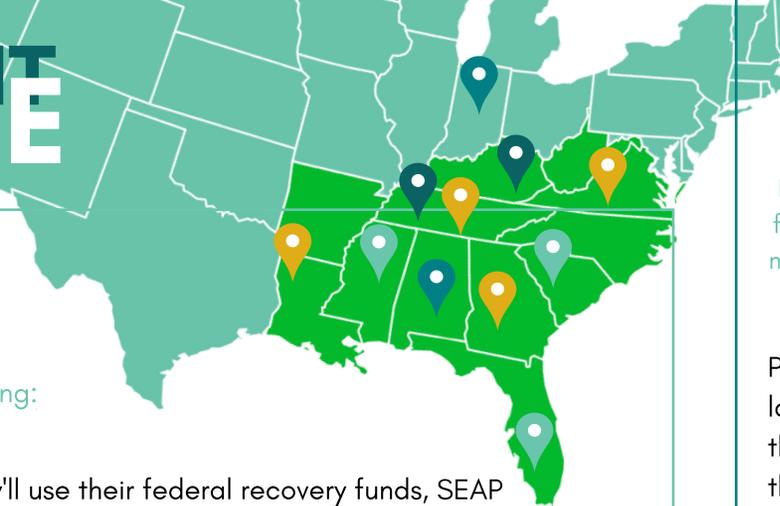
On October 7, 2021, to achieve an equitable recovery from the pandemic, the New Orleans City Council unanimously passed the ARP Model Resolution, drafted by the SEAP. The resolution commits the city to utilize its share of ARP funds to promote a community-sustaining recovery across all neighborhoods and sectors. The declaration includes but is not limited to prioritizing the improvement of public health, education, and housing. Nellie Catzen, the Executive Director of Committee for a Better New Orleans, introduced the resolution with support from Councilmembers Kristin Gisleson Palmer and Jay Banks.

## Status of Local Recovery Funds: Why Advocacy Matters

Now that State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) are arriving, we begin to see common trends with how local leaders are approaching spending decisions. In early October, an AP story confirmed that little SLFRF spending had occurred by the initial U.S. Treasury reporting deadline (Aug. 31). This makes sense considering that many local leaders are following Treasury's guidance to consider strategic, long-term investments and build time for community engagement and outreach. **Communities have until 12/31/2024 to make plans for SLFRF funds and until 12/31/2026 to complete spending. This schedule gives ample time for thoughtful dialogue on priorities between residents and local decision-makers.**

In addition, the National League of Cities (NLC) annual report on fiscal conditions across 400 U.S. cities indicates that more than half of the cities surveyed plan to use SLFRF to offset economic impacts from the pandemic. These recovery strategies will be vital in building more equitable and resilient communities. A third of cities planning to use SLFRF for revenue replacement anticipate only using 20% or less of their funds for this purpose. This indicates a significant opportunity to direct the majority of SLFRF dollars toward programs and projects with real community impact.

The coming months will be a critical time for leaders to commit to community engagement on recovery spending. This way, they can connect with residents to identify local investments that have the most significant benefit for their citizens. Advocates and community partners should seize this opportunity to engage in ARP dialogue and help local leaders make well-informed and transparent local spending decisions.



## Large Cities Begin to Share Spending Plans

Below is a great example from North Carolina's first round of "Recovery Plan" reporting. To learn more about why these reports are important, see [the Treasury's latest report](#).

Per an August 31 reporting deadline, the largest cities in the U.S. have submitted their first SLFRF "Recovery Plan" reports to the Treasury. These reports provide the initial view on how bigger communities plan to invest SLFRF funds and how they'll meet the Treasury's instructions to incorporate community engagement and to consider equity aspects of their spending. Cities must publish these reports on their public-facing websites.

Durham, North Carolina provides an excellent best practice example of the SLFRF approach, including robust community outreach and a commitment to equity considerations. Durham's first [Recovery Plan](#) report highlights Durham's significant work to engage residents in choosing top spending priorities. Durham's outreach process includes community surveys, virtual events, and community-driven applications for SLFRF spending proposals.

On the final page of this report are links to the main Southeast cities' Recovery Plans. Also, check out this [recent U.S. Treasury report on Recovery Plan info](#) submitted by communities across the country.

## New Map! Tracking ARP Equity & Engagement News

SEAP's map of equity and outreach examples is growing: Visit the map [here](#) to view newly added data.

As more communities start building plans for how they'll use their federal recovery funds, SEAP is tracking real-time examples of best practices. Our online ARP news tracker shows examples of community outreach and engagement related to SLFRF plans. The tracker also showcases communities with plans for SLFRF spending with an equity focus. We've grouped these initiatives by category if you're interested in particular topics (affordable housing, household or business assistance, etc.). Use the tracker to select from more than 200 examples we've found, or read our summary report to review a smaller set of highlights. The U.S. Treasury included our report in its early data update concerning how governments are committing recovery funds.

We'll be adding more examples throughout the Fall, so you can continue to learn about different strategies and approaches. If you'd like us to include information from your community, please email Morgan Smith at: [southstrong@rooseveltinstitute.org](mailto:southstrong@rooseveltinstitute.org).

## More SLFRF Data to Come

Our next project will involve collecting detail on the status of SLFRF decisions in Southeast cities, large and small. Soon, SEAP will share where SLFRF spending decisions are just beginning, in progress, or nearly complete. This resource can help local leaders map out the opportunity for engagement and understand how their regions are moving forward in recovery spending plans.

Alongside that progress info, we'll show how cities are directing SLFRF dollars by sorting their plans into key spending categories (affordable housing, household assistance, business support, infrastructure, premium pay, etc.). This data will help advocates and decision-makers recognize emerging trends and also collect ideas for strategic recovery investments.

**Look for this new SEAP resource to launch next month.**

# “Recovery Plan” Reports from Larger Jurisdictions

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Atlanta, GA

Jacksonville, FL

Miami, FL

Tampa Bay, FL

Orlando, FL

St. Petersburg, FL

Charlotte, NC

Raleigh, NC

Greensboro, NC

Durham, NC

Nashville, TN

Louisville, KY

New Orleans, LA

Virginia Beach, VA

