

RESOLUTION

NO. R-21-371

CITY HALL: October 7, 2021

BY: COUNCILMEMBERS BANKS AND GISLESON PALMER

**A RESOLUTION COMMITTING THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS TO THE
STRATEGIC, EQUITABLE, TRANSPARENT, AND RESPONSIBLE USE OF
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN FUNDS**

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 global pandemic caused unprecedented health and economic impacts to communities worldwide and across the United States; and

WHEREAS, the pandemic has resulted in a tragic loss of life, created long-term health impacts for many survivors, isolated our seniors, wreaked havoc on the mental health of millions, overburdened health care systems, and exacerbated many of the underlying vulnerabilities in our communities; and

WHEREAS, the economic impacts triggered by the pandemic caused millions of jobs to be lost, thousands of small businesses to close, and in many instances resulted in those least able to afford missing work becoming the most exposed to infection; and

WHEREAS, these severe and extended economic impacts have led to increased insecurity for local families who struggle to meet household expenses for housing, food, and basic utilities; and

WHEREAS, the negative health outcomes from the COVID-19 virus have been found to disproportionately affect communities of color; and

WHEREAS, the loss of jobs and income due to the pandemic's economic downturn have been borne to a greater degree by our most vulnerable lower income households; and

WHEREAS, the measures taken to minimize the spread of the COVID-19 virus also caused significant disruption to the nature and form of our community's civic discourse, through limitations on public gatherings and forums; and

WHEREAS, the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act was signed into law on March 11, 2021 in which the federal government has taken the heretofore unprecedented action to

appropriate \$130,000,000,000 in direct funding to local governments to aid them in combatting the challenges created by the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the funds provided by the ARP may be used for a variety of purposes related to rebuilding and strengthening our communities so long as the funds are spent by December 31, 2024; and

WHEREAS, these ARP funds will provide a significant one-time, supplemental resource for our local government to use for the benefit of our community; and

WHEREAS, these ARP funds can support strategic initiatives that encourage recovery while also accelerating progress towards long-range community goals; and

WHEREAS, the City of New Orleans is committed to using the opportunity created by the ARP funds to uplift, support, and improve the quality of life of all members of this community; and **NOW THEREFORE**

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS, That the Council:

1. The City of New Orleans declares that in utilizing ARP funds, priority shall be given to the following: supporting economic recovery for all with special emphasis to aiding those on the lower end of the wage scale, improving public health and safety, supporting local businesses and workforce development, increasing access to and improving the quality of public education, improving equity outcomes, and supporting the housing needs in our community.
2. The City of New Orleans will seek community input on the use of ARP funds, and will incorporate community perspectives in decision-making related to ARP resources. Recognizing that true inclusivity often requires making an extra effort to obtain input from those in disadvantaged groups, a variety of methods will be used to engage with the citizenry.
3. The City of New Orleans will commit to a high degree of accountability and transparency in the use of ARP funds, and will provide regular and accessible information to the community regarding the allocation of ARP funds to various uses.
4. The City of New Orleans will commit to measuring outcomes and results from the use of ARP funds, and will provide this information to the community proactively, using accessible platforms and communication tools.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a certified copy of this resolution be sent by the Clerk of Council to Mayor LaToya Cantrell; Gilbert A. Montañó, Chief Administrative Officer for the City of New Orleans; Marjorianna Willman, Director of the Office of Housing Policy and Community Development; and Jeffrey Schwartz, Director of Economic Development for the City of New Orleans.

THE FOREGOING RESOLUTION WAS READ IN FULL, THE ROLL WAS CALLED ON THE ADOPTION THEREOF, AND RESULTED AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS:

NAYS:

ABSENT:

AND THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.