



CITY OF PACIFIC GROVE

American Rescue Plan Act Community Survey Report

Prepared for Pacific Grove, CA

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Zencity Pulse Report

Introduction

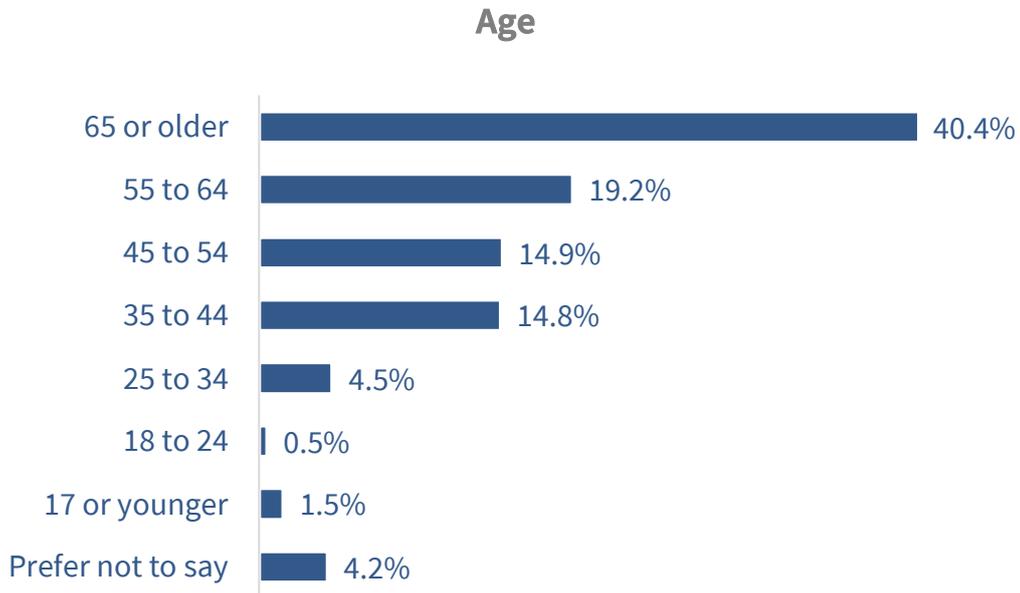
The following report reviews resident input into how the City should best use federal funding provided by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) through an analysis of responses to a survey designed by Zencity and deployed by the City of Pacific Grove. The survey was conducted between April 14, and May 16, 2022 and received 848 responses.

The survey included 1 open-ended and 15 closed-ended questions. The following analysis includes: Results of each closed-ended question; Results of the open-ended question; Related social media discourse analysis; Main takeaways and recommendations.

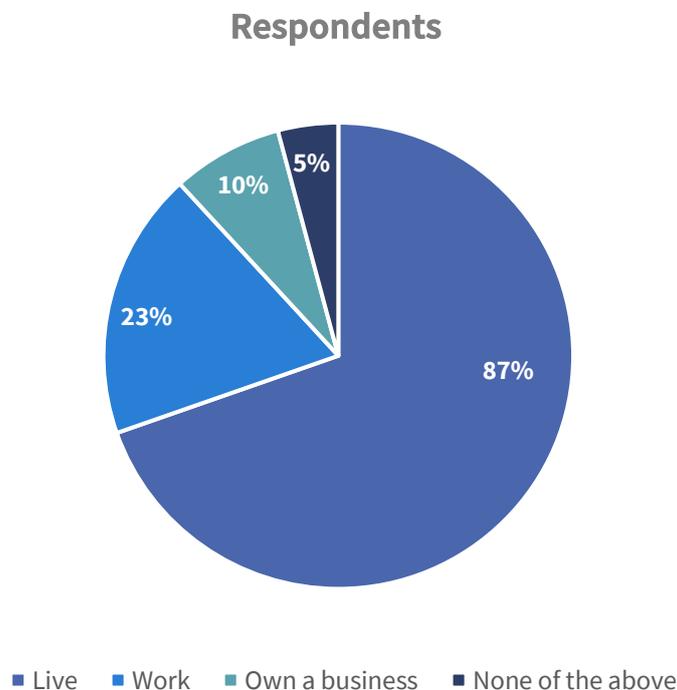
Executive Summary

- Overall, residents expressed more support for city services and infrastructure funding.
- Streets and road repairs and improved parks and recreational options emerged as the most popular priority areas identified by residents.
- Increased funding for police and other public safety services and support on economic issues like affordable housing, homelessness, and relief for local businesses were moderately favorable among respondents.
- The free-text responses reveal that residents are also interested in investment in traffic control and enforcement measures.
- Conversations on ARPA funding received limited online attention, mainly driven by the city's announcements inviting residents to participate in the following survey.

Demographics



More than half (59%) were 55 or older. Nearly a third (29%) of respondents were between 35 and 54 years old.



Almost of all respondents were residents of Pacific Grove (87%). Nearly a quarter of respondents work in Pacific Grove (23%). An additional 10% own a business in the city. Another 5% replied that neither option applies to their situation.

RESULTS ANALYSIS

Closed-Ended Questions Analysis

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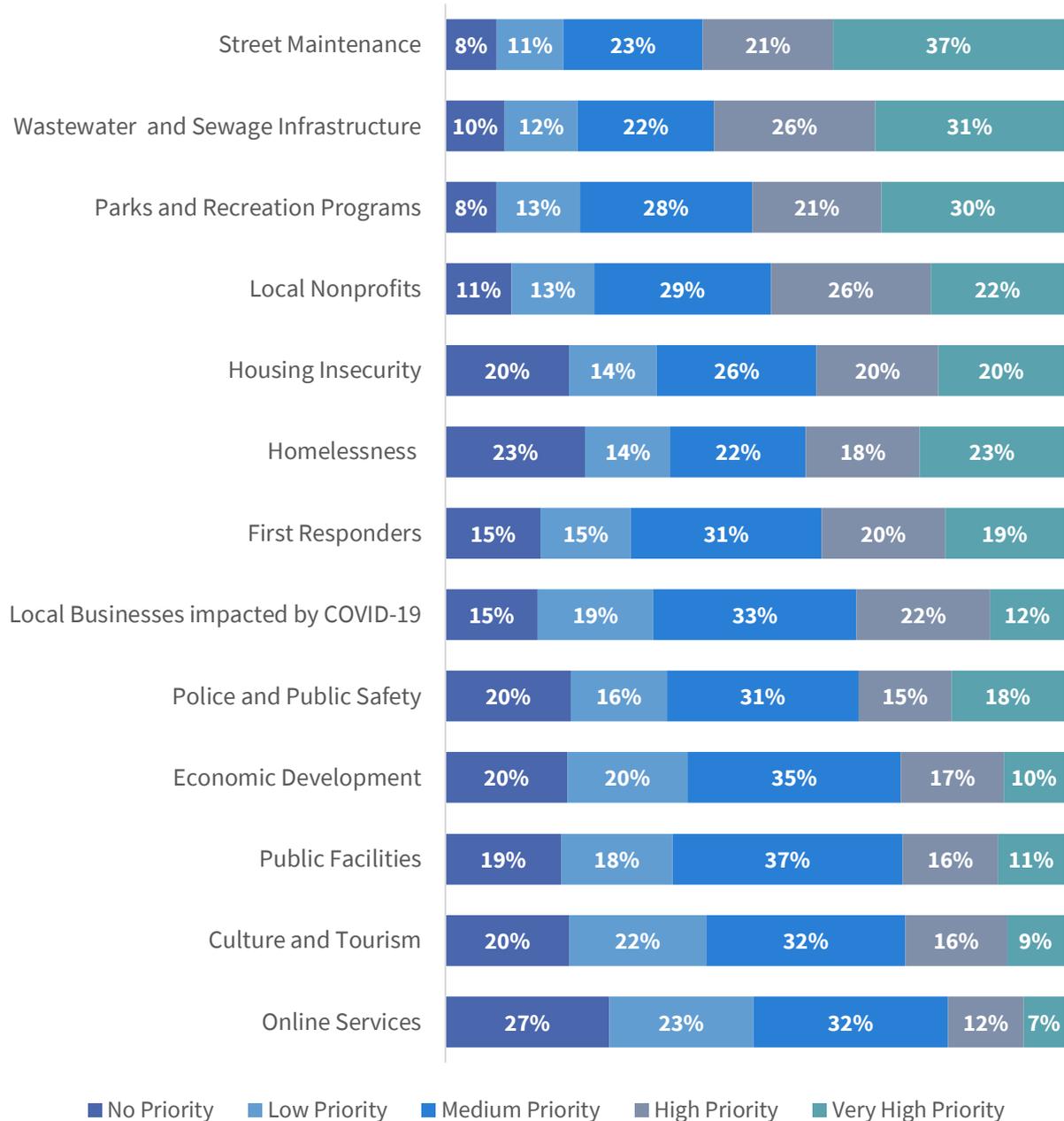
Please rank the following opportunities to use rescue funds.

Residents were asked to rank the priority of **13 proposed uses of ARPA funding**:

- 1 **Housing Insecurity:** Financial support for households facing housing insecurity, such as emergency rent/mortgage assistance, utility assistance, and legal support for those facing eviction or foreclosure
- 2 **Homelessness:** Funding to address homelessness and affordable housing
- 3 **Local Businesses impacted by COVID-19:** Financial assistance to restaurants, bars, retail stores, and other small businesses impacted by COVID-19
- 4 **Local Nonprofits:** such as food banks and social service agencies
- 5 **Culture and Tourism:** Financial support for local arts, music, entertainment, and tourism-related businesses
- 6 **Economic Development:** Funding for new economic development and job training initiatives
- 7 **Wastewater and Sewage Infrastructure:** Improvements to recycled water plant and sewer infrastructure
- 8 **Street Maintenance:** Improvements to public streets, intersections, and sidewalks
- 9 **Public Facilities:** Improvements to city-owned buildings and other public facilities
- 10 **Online Services:** Government technology upgrades to more online services
- 11 **Parks and Recreation Programs:** Increased funding for local parks and recreation programs
- 12 **Police and Public Safety:** Increased funding for police and other public safety services
- 13 **First Responders:** Increased funding for fire, EMS, and other first responders

A summary of resident responses is presented in the graph on the following page, in descending order of the share of high-priority responses (**high and very high priority**).

Proposed Uses of ARPA Funds: Resident Priorities



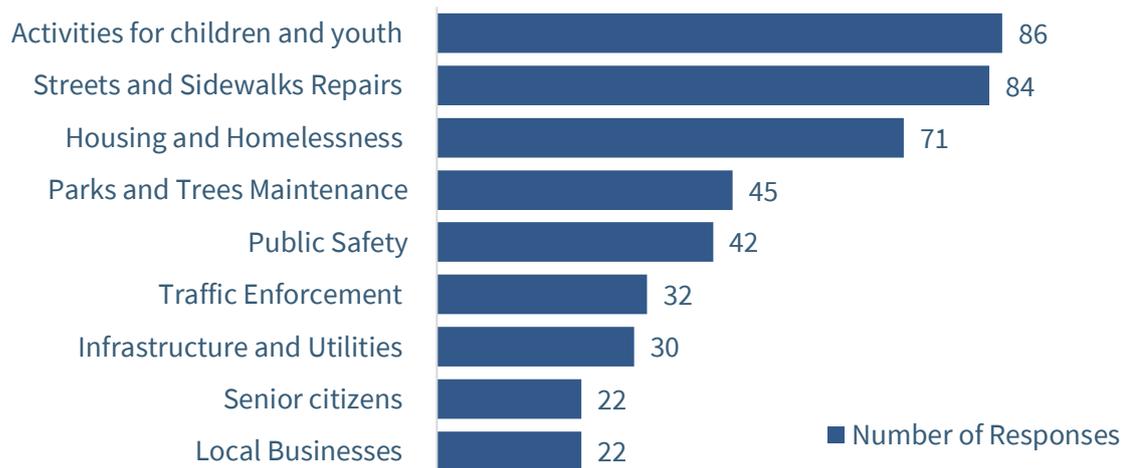
As seen above, residents overwhelmingly identified **Street Maintenance, and Wastewater and Sewage Infrastructure as their preferred area of funding**, with more than half of respondents assigning the highest priority to each of these issues (58% and 57%, respectively). Comparatively, government technology upgrades to more online services was **the least popular proposed funding area** (19% high priority).

A deeper dive into the priority rankings reveals **the following additional takeaways**:

- More than three-quarters of all respondents assigned medium or high priority levels to the top four proposed uses of ARPA, indicating that **most residents are keen to see the city invest its resources in addressing Street Maintenance, Wastewater and Sewage Infrastructure, Parks and Recreation Programs, and Local Nonprofits.**
- **Housing Insecurity and Homelessness** received a similar share of no-priority and very-high priority responses, **indicating residents' attitudes for funding these issues are divided.**
- Over a third of all respondents ranked funding for **First Respondents, Local Businesses Impacted by COVID-19 and Police and Public Safety** as high or very-high priority, suggesting that **residents are relatively invested in the City's support** on these issues.
- More than three-quarters of all respondents assigned **low or no priority to investments in Culture and Arts and Online Services.**

Open-Ended Questions Analysis

2 In what other ways should the City of Pacific Grove use APRA funding?



When asked in what other ways should the City of Pacific Grove use APRA funding, **463 respondents** offered **input through free-text responses**. Analysis of these responses reveals that some of the common themes included:

- **Activities for children and youth (86 responses):** The top piece of feedback — voiced in nearly a fifth of all free-text responses — was that the City needs to offer more recreational programs and facilities for kids and teens. Many of these suggestions included requests for a skatepark.

“Accessible recreation facilities and programs that appeal to our older youth and help build a sense of community and improve physical, mental, and social health. A skatepark!”

- **Street and Sidewalk Repairs (84 responses):** A similar number of respondents requested road repairs and sidewalk improvements, added street lighting, or remarked on pedestrians' general lack of safety.

“It is a great city, but make it safer to walk around for kids, the elderly, everyone--at least sidewalks.”

- **Housing and Homelessness (71 responses):** Many other respondents focused on creating more affordable housing options, rent control, and supporting the homeless population with food, health, and housing resources.

“Rent control and affordable housing for all - not just low income. I'm middle income and completely priced out of PG now too.”

- **Parks and Trees Maintenance (45 responses)**: Respondents requested improved upkeep of the city’s parks trail and facilities, planting more trees, and maintaining existing green spaces.
“Green spaces and parks kept everyone sane [during the pandemic] and are likely our most treasured resource so should be protected and accessible.”
- **Public Safety (42 responses)**: Suggestions on this issue included hiring more police officers, updating police and fire department equipment, improved police presence and patrols and de-escalation training. Additional respondents requested mental health resources and improved social services.
“Police and first responders need extra support and resources as they are burned out.”
- **Traffic Enforcement (32 responses)**: Some urged the city to invest more resources into combatting unsafe driving practices (primarily speeding) such as speed bumps, added stop signs and traffic cameras, and enforcing traffic laws.
“Fix the dangerous streets in our town. Traffic calming is desperately needed immediately.”
- **Infrastructure and Utilities (30 responses)**: Some responses generally called for improved infrastructure and city services. Some respondents mentioned updating the city's electrical and internet services, underground utilities, and shoreline renovations to prepare for rising sea levels.
“Improve the long-term infrastructure of the city: streets, city buildings, add solar panels, improve city's IT, and help those in need.”
- **Senior citizens (22 responses)**: Additional respondents asked to invest in low-income housing for the elderly, food security, facilities, and activities.
“Please support the growing needs our senior population, many neighbors and friends depend upon agencies like Meals on Wheels for their nutrition.”
- **Local Businesses (22 responses)**: A similar number of responses called for support and relief for small businesses, mainly those impacted by the pandemic. A handful of residents voiced concerns over businesses relocating from the city.
“Any way to help fill empty storefronts and bring back small businesses to Pacific Grove? A vibrant downtown is the best way to bring in local tax dollars and increase foot traffic.”
- **Lastly, the following suggestions also featured in the open-ended responses:** Increase city employees’ wages (18 responses), climate action and clean energy (18 responses), treated water and updating sewage infrastructure (10 responses), revitalizing the downtown area (6 responses) and collaborating with non-profit organizations (6 responses).

COMPLEMENTARY ANALYSIS

Social Media Discourse Analysis

From January 1-May 22, 2022, online conversations about **ARPA** captured only [95 interactions](#) on Zencity's dashboard — accounting for about 0.06% of the city's overall social media discourse in the examined period.

Most of the discussions were led by **official messaging announcing the city's online survey on ARPA funding** and inviting residents to provide feedback on this issue (77% of the discourse). Engagements with these posts mainly consisted of 'likes,' **reflecting tacit interest and support.**

Conclusions

The survey results outlined above reveal several key takeaways about how Pacific Grove residents believe the city could best appropriate ARPA funds to maximize impact in the community:

Overall, the survey responses indicate **that residents most support city services and infrastructure funding**. Respondents assigned the highest priorities to **street maintenance, road repairs, and treated water and sewage infrastructure**. Most respondents ranked these issues as their top funding preference in the closed-ended question. Additionally, about a quarter of respondents highlighted these issues in the open-ended question.

More than half of the respondents assigned very-high or high priority levels to the city's **parks and recreational facilities**. Additionally, over a quarter of free-text responses called for improvements to local parks, **indicating substantial support for improving the city's parks and recreation options**. Residents' free-text suggestions focus on **recreational activities for children, youth, and senior citizens**.

As such, the survey indicates that **street maintenance and water infrastructure are at the forefront of residents' minds**, and many support using ARPA funds to invest in the city's sidewalks and road repairs and improvements to the recycled water plant and sewer infrastructure. The second leading funding preference focuses on **parks and recreational activities**.

Affordable Housing and assistance to the homeless population also ranked highly in both parts of the survey, indicating residents' interest in the city's support and assistance on these issues.

Residents viewed funding for **law enforcement** and **local businesses** similarly as a **moderate concern for funding**.

An issue that emerged from the open-ended question analysis was **traffic control and enforcement requests**.