

# Engaging Harrisonburg



Results of a six month public input process about allocating ARPA funds



# Presentation Overview

1. Best Practices of Public Input
2. Our Public Input Approach
3. Who Engaged? Who Provided Input?
4. Key Findings
  - a. Pandemic Impacts
  - b. Priority Needs of the Whole Group
  - c. Priority Needs of Low Income Households
  - d. Priority Needs by Race and Ethnicity
5. Summary
6. Suggested Next Steps



# Public Input Best Practices

- **Getting people to the “table”**
  - Making spaces accessible
  - Meeting people where they are
  - Working with community partners
- **Facilitating multiple ways to share experiences and ideas**
  - Ensuring understanding of impacts and needs
  - Identify solutions that will address those needs
  - Helping the community recognize the need to make choices

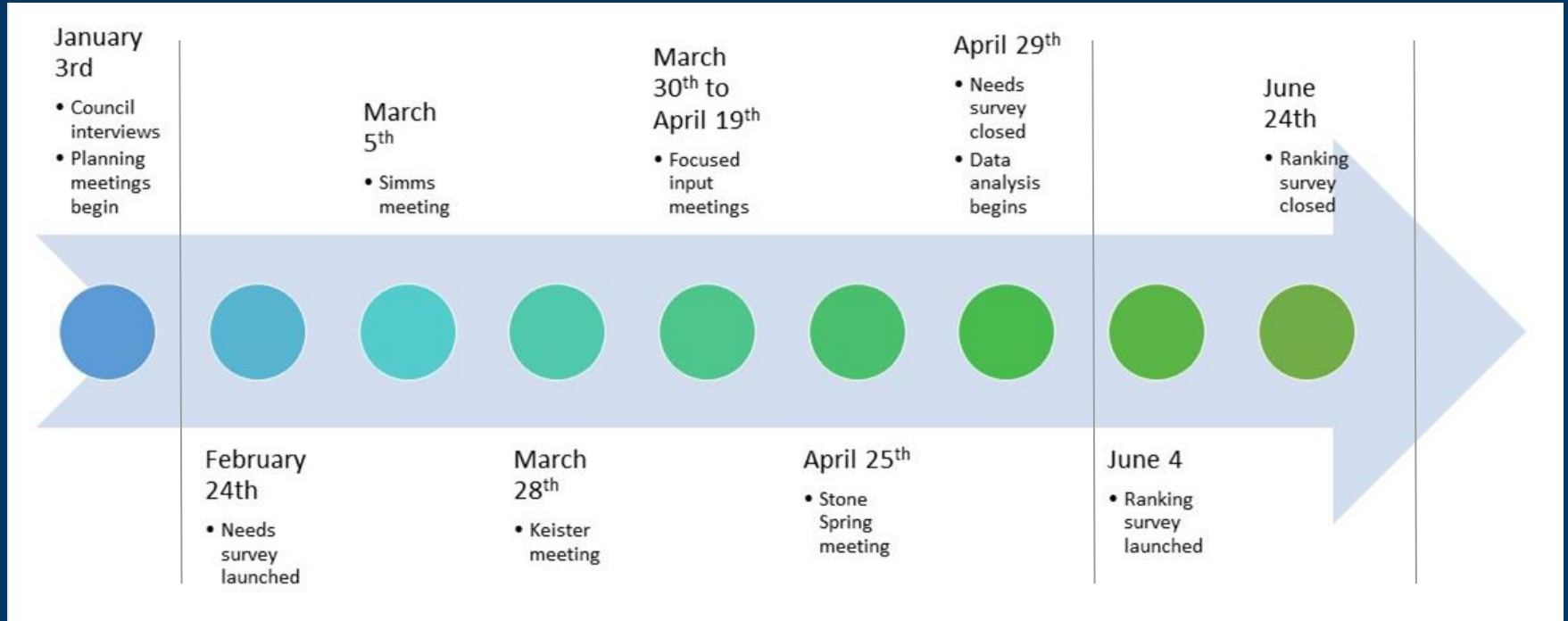


# Public Input Best Practices

- Using public input for decision-making
  - Being transparent - ensuring people can “see” their input
  - Recognizing public values about how decisions should be made
    - *Align decisions with existing plans*
    - *Support what already exists and those already meeting needs*
    - *Make investments that do not create future tax burdens*
    - *Invest in our most vulnerable*
    - *Seek long-term, innovative solutions*
    - *Address past harms*



# Our Public Input Approach



← Phase One →

← Phase Two →

# Process Timeline

# Ways that We Asked for Input

## Assessing Needs

- Online survey
- Paper survey
- Open public meetings
- Focused input meetings

*Identifying pandemic impacts and ranking the needs that emerged or were made worse*

## Ranking Needs

- 'Pop-Ups'
  - Online survey
  - Paper survey

*Reprioritizing the needs that emerged or were made worse*



### Community Health and Wellness

Supporting physical, mental health and substance abuse programs, and support for social services and programming.

### Neighborhood Investments

Improvements to roads and sidewalks, parks and playgrounds, community and recreation centers, and trails to support biking and walking.

### Community Services for Individuals and Families

Homelessness and housing services, childcare, youth services, programs and support for seniors.

### Maintaining and Growing Jobs and Businesses

Investments in tourism, hospitality, and travel, efforts to increase job creation and workforce training.

### Public Facilities and Services

Improvements in public services including water and sewer, public safety programs and equipment.



### Increasing Safe, Accessible, and Sustainable Housing

This includes needs like ensuring more rental housing, more affordable housing for purchase, energy efficiency incentives, and sheltering the homeless

### Expanding and Enhancing Public Spaces

This includes needs like expanding and enhancing arts and cultural spaces, public parks, greenways, community recreation centers and pools, and centralizing community information

### Upgrading Neighborhood Livability and Sustainability

This includes needs like upgrading and expanding sidewalks, improving roads and bike lanes, managing flooding, increasing Wifi access, and beautifying neighborhoods

### Improving Community Mental and Physical Health

This includes needs like substance abuse help, mental health treatment, health clinics, food access, and support for seniors and those with disabilities

### Strengthening Support for K-12 Students

This includes needs like school buildings, student mental health, tutoring, and summer and before/after school programs

### Supporting Our Workers and Working Families

This includes needs like competitive and living wages, job training, affordable and quality childcare, and incentivizing businesses

### Building Capacity of City Government and Its Services

This includes needs like fully staffing safety personnel and departments, water and sewer improvements, sustainability of city property, and offering services in multiple languages

### Improving How We Get Around

This includes needs like public transportation, bike lanes, creating a network of usable sidewalks, and electric vehicle charging stations

Ensuring more affordable, safe, and quality rental housing in the city

Increasing more affordable housing for purchase (expanding...

Enhancing homeless sheltering options

Improving home energy efficiency and environmental sustain...

Improving public school facilities

Expanding student mental health support

Growing before and after school programs

Improving teacher compensation

Expanding tutoring and mentorship

Increasing affordable summer camps

Supporting competitive wages

Advancing living wages for all workers

Expanding both in person and virtual training across multiple job types

Expanding public transportation services

Increasing and connecting bike lanes and trails

Increasing public and private electric vehicle use

Improving the network of usable sidewalks and accessible sidewalks

Enhancing language accessibility of city's services

Converting city government buildings and vehicles to more environmentally sustainable options

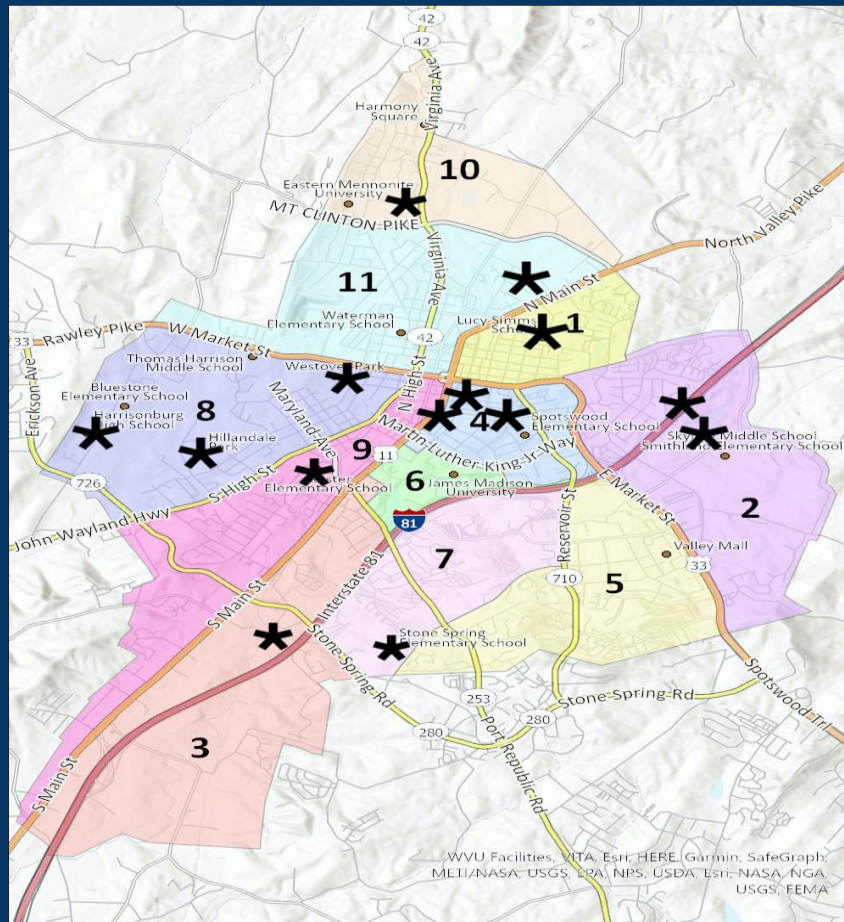
Ensuring accessibility to all public spaces for people with disabilities

# Moving from Needs Survey to Ranking Survey



# Engagement Event Locations

Harrisonburg High School  
Lucy F. Simms Center+  
Keister Elementary+  
Stone Spring Elementary+  
Vine & Fig  
United Way ALICE Coalition  
Virginia Clean Cities  
Arts Council of the Valley  
Our Community Place  
Child Care Coalition  
Northeast Neighborhood Assoc.  
VAIL  
VPAS  
Westover Pool  
Smithland Dog Park  
Smithland Athletic Fields  
Ramblewood Athletic Fields  
Hillandale Park  
Best.Weekend.Ever  
World Refugee Day  
Juneteenth  
Harrisonburg Farmers Market



In Harrisonburg's  
*Low Income Block*  
*Group* areas:  
**8 events**

In Harrisonburg's  
*Qualified Census*  
*Tract* areas:  
**6 events**

+ Concurrent Spanish Language  
translation used at event

# What the public input information can tell us ...

- **Impacts** of the pandemic
- **Needs** that emerged or were made worse
- **Priorities** amongst those needs
- **Ideas** for meeting prioritized needs

Divided out by ...

- **Race/Ethnicity**
- Age
- **Household Income**
- Census District (Location)
- Resident, Worker, or Business Owner
- Degree of Financial Impacts
- Housing Situation
- Gender Identity

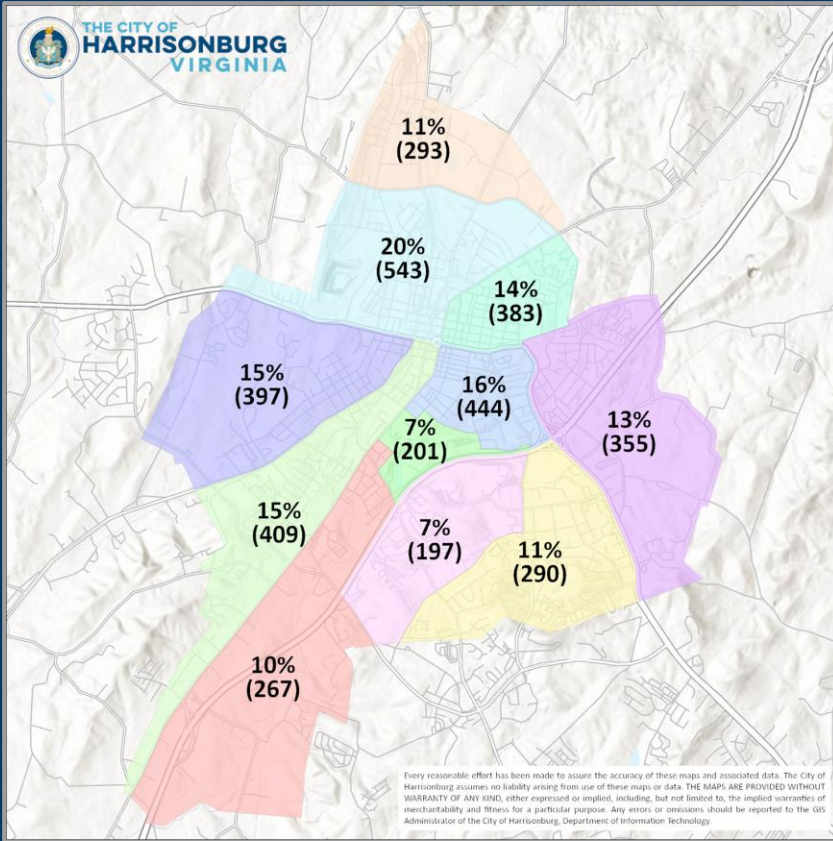


Who Engaged? Who Provided Input?

# Total Engagements

	Engagements	Completions (Full and Partial)
Needs Survey	1776	1246
Open Public Meetings	~200	
Focused Input Meetings	157	
Ranking Survey	1086	
<i>Total</i>	<i>3219</i>	<i>2689</i>





# Locations of Participants

	<u>Census Data</u> (2021 est.)	Needs Survey	Open Public Meetings**	Focused Input Meetings**	Ranking Survey
<b>Non-White</b>	11%	11%	44%	43%	14%
<b>White</b>	77%	75%	56%	56%	74%
<b>Multiracial/ Not Say</b>	8%	13%	<1%	<1%	13%
	**Collection of demographic data incomplete for open and focused input meetings				

*Across the surveys and the public and focused input meetings, % of participants reporting **household income under \$40,000** ranged from **17% to 46%***

**Summary: Participation By ARPA Focus and Across Input Events**

# Key Findings



# Consistently Identified Priorities

- Housing
  - *Safe and affordable, quality rental housing*
- Mental and Physical Health
  - *Adequate health care clinics*
  - *Increasing substance abuse treatment services*
- Workers and Working Families
  - *Affordable, accessible child care*





	Survey	Open Public Meetings	Focused Input Meetings
<b>1 (Most frequent)</b>	Housing	Public Spaces	Workers and Working Families
<b>2</b>	Mental and Physical Health	Housing	Mental and Physical Health
<b>3</b>	Workers and Working Families	Workers and Working Families	Housing
<b>4</b>	Getting Around	Neighborhood Livability	Getting around
<b>5</b>	Neighborhood Livability	City Gov and Services	Public Spaces
<b>6</b>	Public Spaces	K-12 Schools and Students	Neighborhood Livability
<b>7</b>	City Gov and Services	Getting Around	K-12 Schools and Students
<b>8 (Least frequent)</b>	K-12 Schools and Students	Mental and Physical Health	City Gov and Services
<i>N</i> =	<i>(people)</i> 1776	<i>(comments)</i> 152	<i>(comments)</i> 239

## Findings: Priority Needs by Frequency Across Events

	Total Responses	Under \$40K Income	Non-White Residents	White Residents
1 (most frequent)	Housing	Mental and Physical Health	Mental and Physical Health	Housing
2	Mental and Physical Health	Housing	Workers and Working families	Mental and Physical Health
3	Workers and Working families	Workers and Working families	Housing	Getting around
4	Getting around	Public Spaces	Getting around	Workers and Working families
5	Public Spaces	Getting around	Public Spaces	Neighborhood Livability
6	Neighborhood Livability	Neighborhood Livability	Neighborhood Livability	Public Spaces
7	City Gov and Services	City Gov and Services	K-12	City Gov and Services
8 (least frequent)	K-12	K-12	City Gov and Services	K-12
N =	1930	282	183	929

**Findings:** Priorities from Needs Survey and Input Meetings Combined

	Total Responses	Under \$40K Income	Non-White Residents	White Residents
<b>First</b>	K-12 Schools and Students	Housing	K-12 Schools and Students	Mental and Physical Health
<b>Second</b>	Mental and Physical Health	Mental and Physical Health	Housing	K-12 Schools and Students
<b>Third</b>	Workers and Working Families	Workers and Working Families	Mental and Physical Health	Workers and Working Families
<b>Fourth</b>	Housing	K-12 Schools and Students	Workers and Working Families	Housing
<b>Fifth</b>	Neighborhood Livability	Neighborhood Livability	Neighborhood Livability	Neighborhood Livability
<b>Sixth</b>	Getting Around	Getting Around	Getting Around	Getting Around
<b>Seventh</b>	Public Spaces	Public Spaces	Public Spaces	Public Spaces
<b>Eighth</b>	City Gov and Services	City Gov and Services	City Gov and Services	City Gov and Services
<i>N =</i>	<i>1086</i>	<i>157</i>	<i>155</i>	<i>698</i>

## Findings: Priorities from Ranking Survey

# Other priorities

- K-12 Schools and Students
  - *Before and after school programs*
  - *Student mental health*
- Getting Around
  - *Improving sidewalk network*
  - *Improving bike lane and trail network*
- Housing
  - *Homeless sheltering*
  - *Pathways to ownership*
- Workers and Working Families
  - *Living wage*
  - *Competitive wages*



# Suggested Next Steps

- City Council facilitated work session to further explore findings and examine specific projects through criteria
- Virtual or in-person one-on-one meetings with ICAD
  - Individual Council Members
  - Executive leadership team of City Staff
- ARPA Public Input Report finalized and made public
- ARPA Public Input data organized and made public



# Appreciations

City Staff, in particular ...

- Mr. Ande Banks
- Ms. Amy Snider
- Mr. Michael Parks
- Mr. Luke Morgan, ARPA Coordinator
- Mr. Chip Brown, GIS Coordinator
- Mr. Chris Quinn, HR Chamber of Commerce

Our 'convening' partners

The ICAD facilitation team

Spanish language interpreters

City Council

The public

---