

American Rescue Plan Task Force



**Jefferson Parish
American Rescue Plan
Task Force**

FINAL REPORT

OVERVIEW

The American Rescue Plan Task Force has convened 8 times to provide recommendations to the Parish Council. The committee took on an ambitious agenda that encompassed hearing 38 proposals from the administration, council members, business groups, non-profits and our municipalities. As a result, the Parish Council is being provided a wide-ranging list of possible uses of the funds that have been well vetted by the task force

The framework of the task force resembled a budget hearing whereby entities presented their case for the best use of these funds. Most of the proposals that were presented were worthwhile for consideration. The \$84 million allocation can only stretch so far and it was the mission of the task force to sort these out and make a viable recommendation to the council. The task force hopes that their commendations on this one-time funding can be the impetus of major changes that when looked back on; made a significant difference in the landscape of Jefferson Parish.

Many of the proposals that came before the task force were conceptual. The ability to properly evaluate the viability and merits of specific projects in comparison to the many others was very difficult. Within these limitations, the task force decided to make dual recommendations: The members felt it important to give general guidelines to the council based on the input we heard and from its deliberations. Furthermore, it was decided to put recommended projects into categories. The categories were prioritized as to the preferred use of the funds

General Guidelines

- The American Rescue Plan funding needs to be utilized to build the future, it needs to be transformative, a game changer.
- Emphasis needs to be given to projects or programs that benefit the entire Parish, not just parochial interests.
- Funds should not be spent on salaries or studies and designs without any foreseeable construction funding.
- Funds have to be spent in accordance with the eligible uses of the American Rescue Plan Act.
- Projects have to be obligated by the end of 2024 and all expenditures made by the end of 2026.
- Funds should be equitably distributed between the East Bank and West Bank.
- Prior to obligating these funds, consideration of other possible sources of funding needs to be taken (e.g. the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and other federal dollars available to Jefferson Parish).
- These one-time funds should not be used for projects that require reoccurring costs.

Prioritized Categories of Projects/Programs

The task forces framework only allowed it to make broad recommendations based on the knowledge that the administration and council will further determine the specific details to budget and expend the funds. Furthermore, because of the lack of detail, there will be no prioritization of any of the specific projects. The recommendation will come in the form of the American Rescue Plan Task Force Worksheet. For the sake of accuracy, the official recommendation to the Parish Council will be Version 7.0 dated January 31, 2022.

The worksheet contains the 38 proposals for the Parish Council's consideration. They are organized into 9 categories. The task force has prioritized the categories and has selected 5 as the recommended priorities. These 5 priorities are listed at the uppermost portion of the worksheet highlighted in green with a checkmark. The remaining categories are listed in no particular ranking and highlighted in gray. The municipality projects are listed as a separate category for consideration and highlighted in blue.

Background

Resolution No. 137857 created the American Rescue Plan Task Force for the purpose of advising the Council on the appropriateness of allocating these funds. The membership was composed of 16 members. The following is the list of appointed members and their appointing authority.

Parish President	Steve Lachute
Parish President	Victor LaRocca
At-Large A	Brett Lawson
At-Large B	Brian Grenrood
District 1	John Litchfield
District 2	Angela Callais
District 3	Pamela Watson
District 4	Mike Quigley
District 5	Bob Evans, Jr.
Civic League of East Jefferson	Jim Young
Jefferson Business Council	Jim Martin
Jefferson Chamber of Commerce	Todd Murphy
JEDCO	Jerry Bologna
Jefferson Finance Authority	Ruth W. Lawson
Metairie Business Development District.	Francisco Christian
West Jefferson Civic Coalition	Oscar Pipkins

Task Force Meetings

District 4 appointee Mike Quigley was elected Chairman. As Chairman he facilitated eight (8) meetings. The following is the list of meetings with their respective planned agendas. For a comprehensive summary on discussions and presentations that occurred during each meeting, minutes for same, including video of each meeting is on file with the Chairman and may be obtained upon request.

Task Force Meeting 1 - October 7, 2021

- 1. Election of Chair or Co-Chairs**
- 2. Selection of Meeting Locations, Dates and Times**
- 3. Format of how Task Force will Conduct Business**
- 4. Discussion of any Support Services Required for Task Force**
- 5. Plan Agenda for the 1st Business Meeting**
- 6. Closing comments**

Task Force Meeting 2 - October 28, 2021

- 1. Approval of the minutes for the October 7, 2021 meeting**
- 2. New business**
- 3. Parish President Cynthia Lee Sheng to address task force and provide priorities and recommendations for the commitment of funds**
- 4. Assistant Parish Attorney Victoria Woods will report on public meeting and remote attendance**
- 5. Old business**
- 6. Public Comments**
- 7. Adjournment**

Task Force Meeting 3 - November 4, 2022

- 1. Approval of the minutes for the October 28, 2021 meeting**
- 2. New business**
- 3. Presentations by the Business Associations:**
 - a. Jerry Bologna representing JEDCO**
 - b. Todd Murphy representing the Jefferson Chamber**
 - c. Adair Dixon representing the Elmwood Business Association**
 - d. Lisa Jennings Barback representing Westbank Business and Industry Association**
- 4. Presentation by Westwego Mayor Robert Billiot**
- 5. Assistant Parish Attorney Victoria Woods will report on public meeting and remote attendance**
- 6. Old business**
- 7. Public Comments**
- 8. Adjournment**

Task Force Meeting 4 - November 18, 2021

9. Approval of the minutes for the November 4, 2021 meeting
10. New business
11. Presentation by Council Chairman Scott Walker
12. Presentation by Councilman Dominick Impastato
13. Presentation by Notre Dame Health Systems
14. Presentation by City of Kenner
15. Presentation by City of Harahan
16. Old business
17. Public Comments
18. Adjournment

Task Force Meeting 5 - December 2, 2021

1. Approval of the minutes for the November 18, 2021 meeting
2. New business
3. Presentation by Councilman At Large Ricky Templet
4. Presentation by Councilman Marion Edwards
5. Presentation by Councilman Deano Bonano
6. Presentation by Councilman Byron Lee
7. Presentation by City of Gretna
8. Presentation by Town of Jean Lafitte
9. Presentation by Elmwood Business Association
10. Old business
11. Public Comments
12. Adjournment

Task Force Meeting 6 - December 16, 2022

1. Approval of the minutes for the December 2, 2021 meeting
2. New business
3. Presentation by Veneeth Iyengar, Executive Director, Louisiana Office of Broadband Development & Connectivity “Connect LA”
4. Presentation by Councilman At Large, Div. A, Ricky Templet
5. Presentation by Councilman Deano Bonano
6. Presentation by Councilman Dominick Impastato, III
7. Presentation by Councilwoman Jennifer VanVrancken
8. Old business
9. Public Comments
10. Adjournment

Task Force Meeting 7 - January 6, 2022

1. Approval of the minutes for the December 16, 2021 meeting

2. New business: The Chairman has recommended a procedure to begin deciding on the methods that we will utilize to develop our advice to the Parish Council. They are as follows:

- The task force members will collectively review each of the proposals and discuss the pros and cons. If we have an unwieldy amount of proposal, we can at this point delete some of the proposal and deem them as not viable.
- After the members have discussed the projects to their satisfaction, the prioritizing of the projects will be undertaken
- Using the worksheet, task force members will rank the projects. The recommended method of scoring is to consider the total amount of projects and give each a score with the top project receiving a 1 with subsequent rankings given a descending number in accordance with their perceived priority. (i.e. if we have 25 projects, the lowest rank will receive a 25)
- The personalized worksheet must be signed and given to the Chairman by a proposed deadline date
- The task force will appoint some members to assist the Chairman in compiling the member rankings and putting into an overall scoresheet of the task force.
- The overall scoresheet will be reviewed by the task force. A decision will then be made as to what priorities will be sent to the Parish Council. Should we send a complete list in priority order or in groups of high, medium or low priority?
- We will need advice on how the recommendation will be forwarded. It needs to be determined if it's sent by resolution, formal letter via hard copy/electronically or a presentation at a council meeting.

Any suggested changes, additions or modifications to the deliberation process?

Any suggested changes, additions or modifications to American Rescue Plan Task Force Worksheet Version 4.0 updated December 27, 2021

Begin the deliberation process as agreed upon by the committee.

3. Old business

4. Public Comments

5. Adjournment

Task Force Meeting 8 - January 20, 2022

1. Approval of the minutes for the January 6, 2022 meeting

2. New business:

- 1) Task Force member Francisco Christian on behalf of the Metairie Central Business District will provide information on the Fat City Leisure Park and Playground Project and request to put it on the worksheet in the appropriate category.
- 2) Per the instructions of the task force members at its January 6, 2022 meeting, the Chairman has provided a list of guidelines and revised the American Rescue Plan Task Force Worksheet to reflect projects into categories. This information has been forwarded via email to the members (Worksheet Version 6.0). The task force will deliberate on the guidelines and rank the categories.