

# **City of Bridgeport**

## **ARPA Community Input Survey & Public Hearing Results**

### **Community Input Objective**

The objective of the community input period was to gather critical data from residents, businesses, and organizations serving Bridgeport on their priorities for spending the \$110M allocated to the City of Bridgeport from the American Rescue Plan Act. Community input was collected through the online survey as well as a public hearing on June 15<sup>th</sup>.

### **Methodology**

The survey was designed to be an easy response format that could be completed in less than ten minutes. Participants were asked for their name, email, organization- if applicable, identify from the ten funding areas which are priorities, and finally a free response section.

Length of survey: June 8- June 25, 2021.

Intended audience: Bridgeport residents, businesses, community organizations, nonprofits, etc.

Number of total responses: 337

Number of unique participants: 327

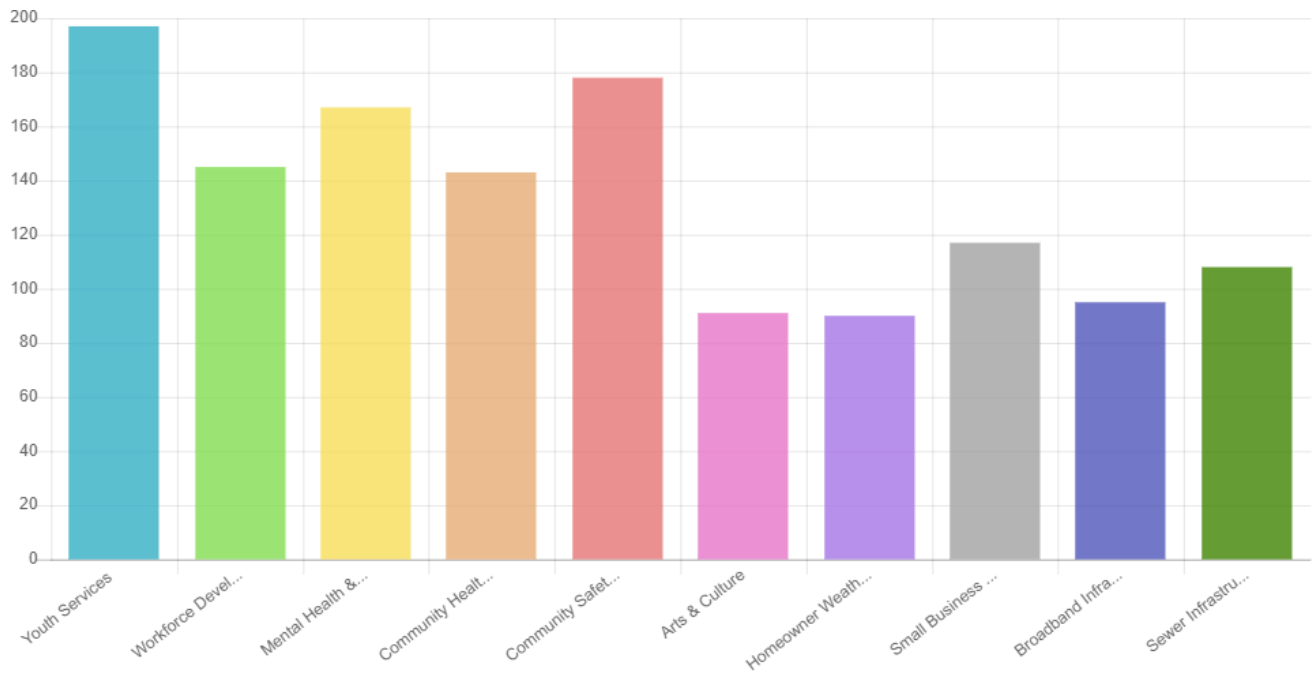
### **Public Hearing Summary:**

A public hearing was held by the City Council on Tuesday June 15<sup>th</sup> at 6pm via Zoom. During the public hearing, twenty-six individuals participated. Many of these individuals also completed the online survey.

The themes from the public hearing included:

- Youth services: mentoring, summer/afterschool programs, college tours, activities to keep the youth and young adults busy and engaged.
- Homelessness outreach & wrap around services
- Access to affordable housing, dealing with the pending eviction crisis.
- Mental health and wellness programs throughout the city for all ages.
- Community safety: some wanted more cameras, security, and policing while others argued for less policing or new ways for civilian response teams.
- Infrastructure investments for broadband and WPCA.
- Premium pay for essential workers.
- Address long-term inequities with sustainable solutions.

## Survey Results



Targeted Area	# of responses	% of total responses
Youth Services	197	58%
Workforce Development	145	43%
Mental Health & Domestic Violence Services	167	50%
Community Health & Wellness	143	42%
Community Safety	178	53%
Arts & Culture	91	27%
Homeowner Weatherization	90	27%
Small Business Assistance	117	35%
Broadband Infrastructure	95	28%
Sewer Infrastructure	108	32%

### Notes from free response section:

257 free responses were completed with the survey, including 8 duplicate participants. Responses range from vague to incredibly detailed programmatic ideas and everything in between.

The common themes from the free response section include, but are not limited to:

- Funding for programs that serve the most vulnerable- housing, food security, mental health, etc.
- Addressing the increase in mental health, addiction and domestic violence needs exacerbated by the pandemic.
- More access to affordable housing.
- Expanded social services.
- Community Safety: addressing gun violence, gang violence, rise in crime, etc.
- Community Safety: more security cameras throughout the city for safety and to prevent illegal dumping.

- Addressing the needs of the elderly and disabled.
- Anti-blight programming, city clean ups, and general beautification of Bridgeport.
- Sewer infrastructure and the WPCA plant upgrades.
- Youth Services: safe activities to keep the youth busy and active through sports & recreational activities, anti-violence programming, educational programming, mentoring.
- Youth Services: employment for teens and young adults, college/career prep etc.
- Small business relief.
- Need for fitness/wellness centers.
- Broadband- providing wifi access to the neighborhoods who lack connectivity.
- Economic development- especially downtown.
- Workforce development training.
- Develop an Office of Tourism within the City of Bridgeport.
- LGBTQ youth center.
- Local art programs and expanded public art.
- Hazard/premium pay for essential workers.
- Expanded programming for Veterans

There were also responses that were not applicable to the allowable costs including: tax relief, street paving, snow plowing, speed bumps in the north end, funding the schools, funding private schools, creating bike paths, repair the bridge to pleasure beach, widening the highway, etc.