



CITY OF NEW HAVEN

JUSTIN ELICKER, MAYOR

165 Church Street

New Haven, Connecticut 06510

T: 203.946.8200 F: 203.946.7683



SINCE 1958

January 14, 2022

The Honorable Tyisha Walker-Myers
President, New Haven Board of Alders
City of New Haven
165 Church Street
New Haven, CT 06510

RE: ORDER OF THE BOARD OF ALDERS APPROPRIATING \$53.0 MILLION FROM THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT TO IMPLEMENT PHASE 3 PANDEMIC RECOVERY INITIATIVES

Dear President Walker-Myers,

I am writing to request the Board of Alders approve an \$53.0 million appropriation from the American Rescue Plan in support Phase 3 pandemic recovery initiatives.

As we all know, our community has suffered profound and very personal and economic impacts due from COVID-19 pandemic. Over 9,000 Connecticut residents have died from COVID-19 and local our positivity rate is substantial in light of the fast-moving Omicron variant. At the same time, there are promising indications of recovery all over the city. With our Health Department and community providers, 64.6% of our 5+ population is vaccinated. Over 50 businesses have opened in 2021 as New Haven continues to be among the leading city's in Connecticut for economic growth. Moreover, the City's population rose 3.3% coming out of the 2020 Census, which was one of the most difficult times ever to get a complete count of everyone in our community. The Summer Reset, launched with the support of the Board of Alders, restored a sense of community and wellbeing, particularly at YARD pops held weekly throughout the summer. It is through this lens of current challenges and future opportunities that we use to set a strong foundation of resiliency for many years forward.

The Phase 3 proposal follows extensive research and a community outreach process known as the Civic Space. I am grateful for the opportunity to listen to the community and hear from constituents about the key issues of our time in small groups, one on one meetings and at one of five general public meetings. With this meaningful conversation in mind, Phase 3 is highlighted by **Youth Engagement and Early Childhood**, with new programming through a network of new and existing youth centers citywide; a new **Vocational and Technical Initiative**, designed to enhance our workforce and entrepreneurial readiness development leading to

sustainable and well-paying careers; and **Housing for All**, through the production of new units as well as supports for renters and homeowners.

We are taking meaningful steps to align eligible programs to address the **Climate Emergency** and respond to the urgent need for programs aimed at **Wealth Creation through Economic Development**. In doing so, we are putting in place a long-term systemic effort to address the racial wealth gap, cultural equity and the creation of intergenerational transfer of wealth. Many residents and stakeholders supported financial and housing navigators, which are included in the Phase 3 program with additional direct financial relief to New Haven's most vulnerable populations.

Public Health and **Parks and Open Space** programs are designed specifically to create a healthier community. The **New Haven Land Bank** is geared toward the adverse impact of vacant or underutilized properties with the goal of putting assets back into use for economic recovery and affordable housing.

Some recommendations (bike- and pedestrian improvements and fiber-to-the-home) will be aligned with our funding goals under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and similar project-based funding sources. A more detailed program description is available as part of this communication as well as a current accounting of Local Recovery Fund spending. I am proposing to retain a balance of \$24.5M as a reserve for future investments, recognizing that other funding sources may not materialize for worthy projects and other needs may emerge in light of the ongoing public health emergency.

The Phase 3 process has also helped us to learn from history to address systemic and institutional racism, develop our own leadership intentionally within local communities and organizations, work with an abundance mindset and an openness to possibilities and strive for accountability to the residents of New Haven in part by committing to foster anti-racist visionary spaces now and well into the future. The [CivicSpaceNHV](#) will remain an open portal for community engagement and transparency in the recovery process.

Thank you for your time and attention to this very important matter, as well your prior support for earlier phases, including the Summer Reset, and I look forward to your continued support in the implementation of the American Rescue Plan here in New Haven.

Sincerely,

Justin Elicker
Mayor

attachments

cc Kevin Alvarez, Mayor's Office
file