

Summary of our campaign



**AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN
ACT OF 2021**

Who we are

The Worcester Together Affordable Housing Coalition



3 Main Goals

- Allocate 20% of ARPA to create and preserve affordable housing for struggling renters & homeowners.
- Strengthen the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Ordinance and have tenant representation.
- Focus on racial equity and communities hardest-hit.



What did we build together along the way?

- Research on ARPA and different affordable housing trust fund models
- We got 42 signatories to a public letter outlining our asks.
- We held five 1:1s with City Councilors & talked to influencers.
- We attended all 5 community input sessions and lifted up affordable housing.
- We submitted recommendations to City Manager after these sessions for better public participation and engagement

What did we build together along the way?

- We raised awareness on the impact of these dollars and who it is meant to support.
- We encouraged the administration to allow for public input on the entire amount, not just \$10,000,000.
- We submitted strong recommendations for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund & advocated to increase the number of people with lived experience. We even advocated they get compensated for the work.
- We are working to building a bench of candidates for the Affordable Housing Trust Commission.

What did we build together along the way?

- We generated calls and email to City Council, Mayor and City Manager from community members.
- We engaged with the press and forced this issue to be talked about during the election by incumbents and new candidates.
- We got CHAPA, one of the most respected housing advocacy organizations in the state, to send a letter of support to the City Manager.

Rental & homelessness prevention:

- Affordable Housing Trust Fund: **\$15,000,000** Create and preserve affordable housing
- Sustaining Housing-First Solutions: **\$4,000,000**: Initial phase \$1.5 million to support WHA's microunits, 2nd phase for additional projects

Total: \$19 million or 67.86% of total allocation

Homeownership

- Down Payment Assistance: **\$1,500,000**, **\$10K** in down-payment assistance for homebuyers up to 100% AMI.
- Home Flood Insurance Assistance: **\$250,000**: **50% cost** reimbursement on flood insurance premiums for Low/Mod Income homeowners
- First-Time Homeownership Development: **\$2,500,000**: Dev. of homeownership opportunities in QCT (Qualified Census Tracts) or Low/Mod Income Homebuyers

Total: \$4.250,000 or \$15.18% of total allocation

Rehab

- Owner-occupied Housing Rehab: **\$2,500,000**: Funding to address code violations and other rehabilitation in QCT or Low/Mod Income owners.
- Lead Program: **\$1,500,000**: Rolling application for lead abatement.
- Capital improvements projects at WHA properties: **\$750,000**

Total: \$4,750,000 or 16.96%

In a snapshot....

We asked for \$29 million of ALL ARPA (state and federal) be allocated to creating & preserving affordable housing for lowest earners

We got \$28,000,000 million in total, including homelessness prevention, rental housing and homeownership.

We asked for racial and economic equity to guide the spending

The City Manager has committed to forming subcommittees to review the spending of ARPA using a scorecard as guidance, and include environmental justice lens. We will have representatives from this group and recruit a person with lived experience to participate.

We asked that the Affordable Housing Trust Fund have two tenants or people with lived experience.

We got the Economic Development standing committee & the City Manager to agree to that

Next steps

1. We are working to recruit a strong slate of candidates and people with lived experience to be part of the subgroup to review housing proposals.
1. We are working to recruit a strong slate of candidates to serve on the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, including two people with lived experience.
1. Continue advocating for transparency and racial equity.
1. Stay engaged as a coalition and bring more people in.