

ARPA Recommendations for Peacham Selectboard

<https://peacham.org/arpa/>

June 10, 2022

What is ARPA?

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) included \$350 billion in pandemic-related aid for state and local governments. Congress directed nearly \$200 million of that funding directly to Vermont's cities, towns, and villages. **Peacham is directly receiving \$214,000.**

Name of Proposal	Funding Request	Recom- mendation	Comments
NEK Broadband	\$30,000	\$30,000	This recommendation for high speed fiber backbone was made earlier than others because of the NEK Broadband deadline of 5/31 and Peacham's opportunity to leverage matching funds that triple the impact of ARPA funds. The Selectboard approved this funding at their 5/18/22 meeting.
Village Water System Infrastructure	\$135,000	\$80,000	The Peacham Fire District has proposed to replace the pumps in our present wells and to dig a new well which will build our resiliency to climate change and increase our capacity to serve village and town residents during times of drought which are increasingly frequent.
Peacham Town Gym Floor	\$40,000	\$20,000	Edwards/Gallas propose to remove the old, plastic tile floor in the town gym and replace it with a professionally installed and finished hardwood (maple) floor.
Community Patio (Library)	\$25,000	\$20,000	Peacham Library proposes to build a covered patio on its front lawn, a public space where people can gather, hold small concerts and meetings, or linger under shelter while using the Library's Wi-Fi or EV charger.
Peacham Pavilion	\$75,000	\$40,000	The Peacham Pavilion Committee proposes building a large outdoor covered gathering space to host multiple community activities to enhance cultural, recreational and economic opportunities.
Support for Cafe Operation	\$10,000	\$3,425	Peacham Cafe LLC will replenish the Support Fund, which was depleted during the COVID-19 pandemic, to support the startup phase of a new operator and ensure the cafe's sustainability.
ARPA Reserve Fund		\$20,000	ARPA committee recommends setting aside a portion of the funds for future unknowns, or to complement other projects, as ARPA spending decisions can be made up until Dec 31, 2024.
		\$213,425	
Peacham TOTAL ARPA	\$214,000		
	-\$574.68	Cost of Community Mailing, approved by SB 3/16/22	
	\$213,425	\$0	REMAINING ARPA FUND

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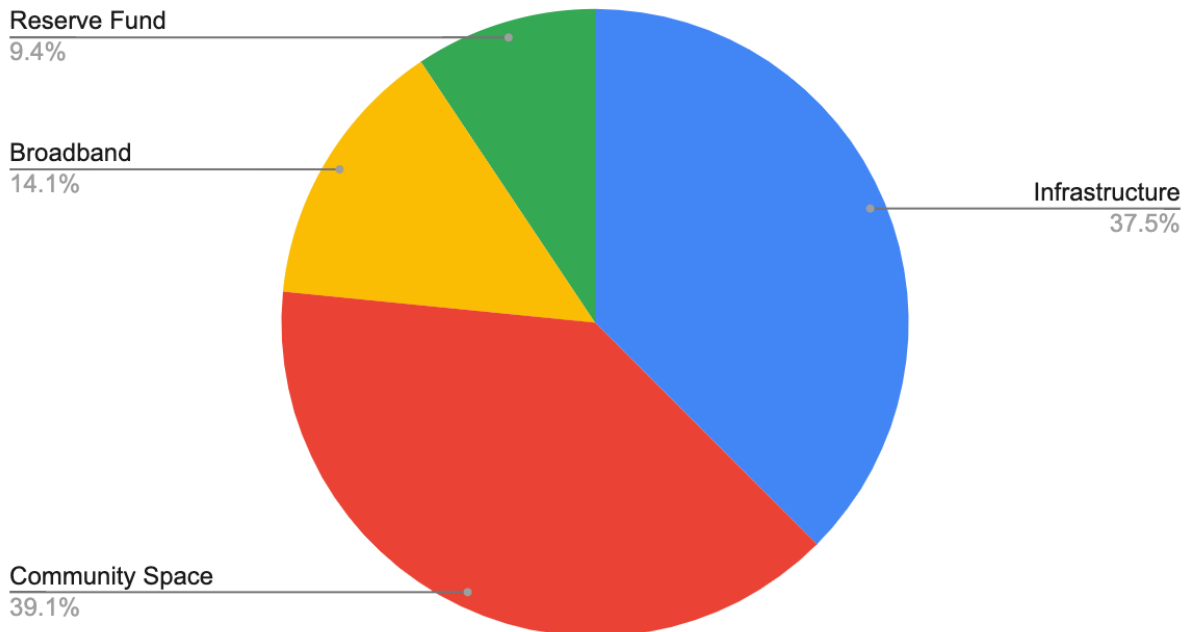
Key Objectives of ARPA Funding:

- Fight the pandemic and support families and businesses struggling with its public health and economic impacts
- Maintain vital public services, even amid declines in revenue resulting from the crisis
- Build a strong, resilient, and equitable recovery by making investments that support long-term growth and opportunity

ARPA Committee Decision-Making Recommendations:

- What creates the greatest benefit for the largest number of Peacham residents?
- Are there other methods of funding the project, other than through ARPA?
- Should all of the funds be spent now, or should some be reserved for future strategic needs?
- What was the original intent of ARPA? (including key objectives, funding criteria that emphasized infrastructure, etc.)
- Were there to be another pandemic, would this investment of funding have mattered?

Peacham ARPA Funding Distribution



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Additional Considerations for Selectboard:

- Many projects brought forward were worthwhile, and should be brought before the town as part of the town budget process and presented as a warning in a future town meeting.
- All projects are encouraged to pursue/leverage the “Suggested Funding Alternatives” (column I) as detailed in the online [Peacham ARPA proposals & recommendations](#) tracking sheet.

Supporting Details:

- ARPA Committee Meeting Minutes: <https://peacham.org/category/arpa-minutes-2022/>
- [ARPA Committee Google Drive](#)
- Community Engagement Opportunities:
 - Saturday, 4/2, 10 am-4 pm ~ ARPA Committee at the Transfer Station
 - Sunday, 4/10, 2 pm ~ Community Input Session #1 (online)
 - Sunday, 4/24, 2 pm ~ Community Input Session #2 (online)

As a result of our outreach to the community, the ARPA committee, which reports to the Selectboard, received over 14 different [recommendations](#) as to how the ARPA funds might be spent in Peacham. As would be expected, the total amount of money requested in the proposals exceeded \$450,000 - a good deal more than the \$214,000 provided to the Town. Meeting monthly with Selectboard member Richard Browne over the past three months, we evaluated each proposal applying the guidelines provided both by the federal government and that of Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT). Our goal was to determine which proposals would have the greatest impact on the community now or in the future, were there to be another pandemic.

It is always difficult to make these recommendations knowing there will be disappointment or elation depending on the outcomes, but we feel we have reached thoughtful conclusions and recommendations to the Selectboard for their consideration. The ARPA Committee plans to attend the July 20, 2022 Selectboard meeting to further discuss and be available to address questions or concerns. We are grateful to all community members for their input and thoughtful, creative proposal recommendations and know that Peacham will be well served by each.

Respectfully submitted by the Peacham ARPA Committee,

Beatrice Ring
Gillian Sewake
Allie Webster, Chair