

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

CHAIR

- Steering and Rules Committee

MEMBER

- Redevelopment Authority - City of Milwaukee
- Wisconsin Center District Board



CAVALIER JOHNSON
COMMON COUNCIL PRESIDENT
ALDERMAN, 2ND DISTRICT

Council passes omnibus ARPA proposal to address key issues in Milwaukee

**Statement of Common Council President Cavalier Johnson
October 21, 2021**

Today, after months of discussion, collaboration, community input and vetting, the Common Council adopted proposals to allocate the first portion of Milwaukee's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, including an omnibus proposal I am proud to have led.

From the onset, I led the Common Council in setting a clear path and direction, with an emphasis on equity and uplifting our residents most in need. That goal has been accomplished today. I want to thank my colleagues for their time and effort on this front, and I want to especially thank the community for their continued advocacy and input along the way. The items passed today in the omnibus proposal reflect the investments that residents and community groups have advocated tirelessly for.

The omnibus represents an investment of \$174,387,670, including historic levels of funding for key areas including: crime and public safety; housing; lead abatement; continued COVID-19 response; funding for Earn and Learn; investment in early childhood education; money to off-set lost revenues; and sustaining essential city services for taxpayers.

Crime and reckless driving are at epidemic proportions in our city, and I ensured adequate investments to make our city safer for all residents. Three police classes totaling 195 officers will be funded through a budget amendment that I am sponsoring, and the Office of Violence Prevention will be receiving over \$3 million in additional funding to expand the 414Life program into the south side and support data and evaluation of the program. Previous ARPA allocations expanded the reach of the Traffic Safety Unit with the Milwaukee Police Department. Further, upstream investments in housing, public health, education, and workforce development work to sustain reductions in crime long-term.

After multiple community meetings, the public made it clear that housing was a top priority. The lack of safe and affordable housing in our city was exacerbated by the ongoing pandemic, and that is why more than \$43 million was allocated to housing projects that will strengthen and revitalize our neighborhoods, and promote home ownership.

-More-

Strong neighborhoods are the backbone of a strong city, and resilient neighborhoods start with making housing affordable and accessible for everyone, regardless of zip code, race, or ethnicity.

It is also abundantly clear that public health is a critical concern for residents citywide. I ensured ARPA funding was allocated to expand our lead abatement program and support COVID-19 mitigation efforts in the Health Department, especially efforts to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in transmission rates, testing, and vaccination. Lead poisoned children have no place in our city, and this investment supports our Health Department to intervene in more cases and provide more families with needed resources to address their health and safety.

Given the restrictions the City has related to revenue generation, I kept an eye on fiscal sustainability and responsibility with ARPA funding to make sure residents, both now and in the future, retain reliable and high-quality city services. The omnibus amendment passed today is another step toward that long term goal.

We are stronger as a body and as a community when we collaborate and work together to tackle the issues before us, and today's ARPA allocation is a great example of that. While we still have much work before us, getting these resources into the community will provide a significant boost to accelerate our city's recovery from the pandemic. As we resume talks next year on how to best allocate the second portion of ARPA dollars, I look forward to continued discussions with my colleagues, community leaders, resident, and advocacy groups. The needs of our city will always be evolving, and I promise to remain diligent in our efforts to support the community in the most efficient and impactful way possible.

-30-

