

CITY OF BOISE
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN
COMMUNITY OUTREACH REPORT

January 2022



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Boise received \$36 million through the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. This funding provides the city with a once in a generation opportunity to invest in our community, meet our residents' most pressing needs, and allow us to rebuild a stronger, more equitable economy as we continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To ensure that we prioritize funding to meet the needs of those most impacted and hardest hit by the pandemic, the Mayor's Office and the Office of Community Engagement partnered with key stakeholders and non-profit partners to identify needs in the community. Together, we determined five priority areas:



HOUSING



**MENTAL
HEALTH**



**FOOD
SECURITY**



**SMALL
BUSINESS
SUPPORT**



CHILDCARE

The next step in the process was to hear directly from underserved and underrepresented community members, including refugees, immigrants, seniors, Hispanic/Latino community members, individuals with disabilities, renters and low-income residents.

The Mayor's Office and the Office of Community Engagement hosted three small-group, invite only listening sessions with Mayor McLean and Boise City Councilmembers to hear ideas, solutions, and insights from impacted residents directly on ways we can invest these funds most effectively. The listening sessions were held in November and December 2021. Those who were unable to attend in person had the opportunity to provide input through an online idea generation portal, which launched on September 16, 2021, and closed on January 3, 2022.

This report outlines the City of Boise's community outreach process. It includes all of the input gathered from Boise residents on the key areas of need through the listening sessions and the online idea generation page. Summaries of the conversations from the listening sessions and an analysis of the online portal responses are detailed in this report.

INTRODUCTION



In May of 2021, the U.S. Department of the Treasury announced the launch of the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, established by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, to provide \$350 billion in emergency funding for eligible state, local, territorial, and Tribal governments. Recipients have the flexibility to invest funds in diverse ways to best address the needs of their communities. The funds may be used to:

- Support public health expenditures
- Address negative economic impacts caused by the public health emergency
- Replace lost public sector revenue
- Provide premium pay for essential workers
- Invest in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure

While the City of Boise has until 2024 to allocate funds and until 2026 to spend them, it is important to Mayor McLean and the city to understand the multitude of needs in our community and address them as quickly as possible.

To ensure our recovery efforts match the needs of the community, especially those who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, Mayor McLean, Boise City Councilmembers, and staff have gone directly to community members and partners to collect ideas, solutions, and insight that will help us invest these funds effectively.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROCESS OVERVIEW

COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROCESS OVERVIEW

- Meetings with community partners
 - Identification of five key areas of need
- Three invite-only listening sessions
- Online idea generation portal

MEETINGS WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS

City of Boise staff met with various nonprofits, organizations, and community partners, including United Way of the Treasure Valley, Idaho Community Foundation, Idaho Nonprofit Center, Idaho Foodbank, Boise Schools Foundation, Surel's Place, Boise Contemporary Theatre, Idaho Association for the Education of Young Children, Jannus, PODER of Idaho, the African American Chamber of Commerce, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Foster Youth Advisory Board, and Boise School District. Conversations centered around what the communities they serve need most during the pandemic, recent successes and pain points, possible solutions or strategies, and any potential capacity they have for increasing their impact and services.

It was through these conversations that city staff developed five key areas of need for our community:



HOUSING



**MENTAL
HEALTH**



**FOOD
SECURITY**



**SMALL
BUSINESS
SUPPORT**



CHILDCARE

These key areas of need were used as the foundation for the following listening sessions and online idea generation portal.

LISTENING SESSIONS

Three one-hour listening sessions were held in November and December 2021 with Mayor McLean, Boise City Council members and residents from communities disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

City of Boise staff worked with community partners, including non-profits, resettlement agencies, housing providers, as well as their own established networks to invite community members to attend a listening session. Each session included a diverse group of community members - renters, immigrants, refugees, members of the BIPOC communities, seniors and others. Each group was candid in sharing their own experiences, as well as those of their friends and families, around the five priority areas, which provided the opportunity for collaborating on how funds could be distributed within each of the five key areas of need to facilitate recovery. The discussion also touched on everything from accessibility to reliable and affordable broadband internet.

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION	# OF ATTENDEES
LISTENING SESSION #1	November 10, 2021	Whitney Community Center	8
LISTENING SESSION #2	November 13, 2021	Global Lounge	17
LISTENING SESSION #3	December 8, 2021	Library at Cole & Ustick	11

At each meeting Mayor McLean and council members welcomed the group and shared their vision for using ARPA funds in a way that integrates community feedback to have the greatest impact in our city, and for those hardest hit by the pandemic. Attendees heard a brief overview of ARPA, how much the city received, their guidelines and

deadlines, as well as the city's community outreach and decision-making process. Attendees then engaged in small group conversations at their tables to brainstorm ideas for each of the key areas of focus. Each group then reported back to the room while city staff took detailed notes on sticky pads. Discussion questions were designed to elicit input and direct experiences on the most common difficulties residents have been faced with throughout the pandemic. Attendees were asked to reflect on the barriers that impact housing and food stability, mental health, childcare, access to internet, and running small businesses. They were asked to identify resources that helped them, or resources they wish they had access to, and how those would impact their community.

Example discussion questions include:

- Have you, your family or friends struggled to find or keep housing? For example, paying rent or mortgage?
- What expense is the most difficult for your family, or for those you serve, to pay?
- What would make starting or running a small business easier in Boise?
- If you had access to cheaper, faster internet, how would it affect your life on a daily basis?
- How can the City of Boise use the American Rescue Plan funds to help address the needs identified around housing, childcare, small business support, food security, mental health and broadband?



ONLINE IDEA GENERATION PORTAL

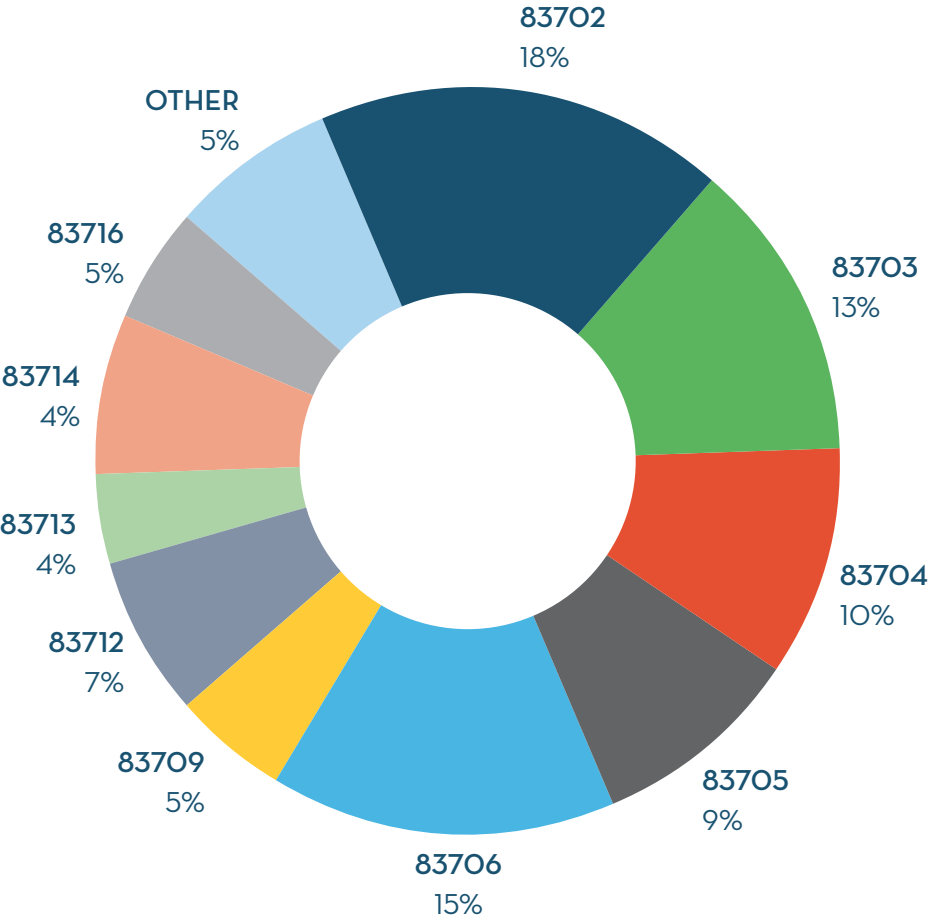
The portal was announced by Mayor McLean at her State of the City address on September 16, 2021 and opened the same evening.

The Office of Community Engagement and Mayor's Office staff shared a link to the portal to their partner networks and on City of Boise and Mayor McLean's social media channels. Information about the portal was included in the City of Boise's weekly newsletter, In the Know.

Respondents were asked to submit ideas for addressing each of the key areas of focus, as well as the potential impact their idea would have on vulnerable communities. The portal clarified that these five key areas had been identified by the city in collaboration with community partners including nonprofits, resettlement agencies, and the school districts. It also included a link to the U.S. Department of the Treasury's ARPA Fact Sheet, which contains very detailed information about the guidelines on how the funds can be used. Many of the respondents only filled out answers to one or two of the key areas of focus. Some who completed each field repeated their answers in each section, while others provided unique solutions for each area of focus.

In total, 315 people filled submitted ideas and recommendations. Boise residents accounted for 295 of the responses, while 20 responses come from people living outside of Boise, and even outside of Idaho.

RESPONSES BY ZIP CODE



RESULTS

RESULTS: LISTENING SESSIONS

Community members pointed out that many of the key areas of focus are inextricably linked – especially mental health and housing stability. Loss of revenue for small businesses impacts housing; access to mental health resources impacts one’s ability to find and keep employment; and housing affordability impacts one’s ability to afford childcare. They also shared that transportation has a direct impact on each of the key areas of focus and should be considered during these discussions. Attendees insisted that help cannot come fast

enough for our community, but that short-term and immediate interventions need to be paired with long-term, sustainable strategies.

Attendees insisted that help cannot come fast enough for our community, but that short-term and immediate interventions need to be paired with long-term, sustainable strategies.

Many attendees were in favor of using funds to support the work being done by local non-profits,

community partners and leaders, and to prioritize community-based programs. Some of the local organizations that were specifically mentioned include the YMCA and the Boys & Girls Club.

Several groups had discussions around accessibility; attendees identified barriers that prevent Boise residents from finding and accessing existing resources. Programs and funding provided via ARPA should be low barrier, translated into the languages spoken by residents (other than English), distributed in an accessible format, and not require the use of technology/internet. There were also many discussions around ensuring initiatives funded by ARPA remain accessible and relevant for our refugee and immigrant communities. For instance, community housing, food banks, and mental health resources should be appropriate across diverse cultures. One attendee pointed out that Phoenix allocated a percentage of funding specifically for their refugee and immigrant populations.

Specific feedback for each area of need is outlined below:



HOUSING

CHALLENGES	SOLUTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rents are increasing • Barriers to housing include not having credit or rental history, seniors on fixed incomes, etc. 43% of BSU students are experiencing housing insecurity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rental assistance/subsidization; utility assistance; rapid rehousing • Rent stabilization • Tax breaks/incentives for developers building affordable housing and/or ADUs • First time home buyer funding/loans • Create community and/or intergenerational housing that has on-site job training



MENTAL HEALTH

CHALLENGES	SOLUTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminalization of mental health • Stigmatization of mental health, especially in immigrant and refugee communities • Difficulty finding mental health support/resources in languages other than English • Prolonged isolation impacts mental health – especially for seniors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase number of mental health providers • Create a pipeline for students interested in working in mental health • Mentorship or peer support programs for youth and for adults • Communications that normalize discussing mental health and seeking support • Identify ways to support folks in mental health crises, like training safety officers



FOOD SECURITY

CHALLENGES	SOLUTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Barriers to access food stamps• Food stamps do not cover hygiene items• Food security options need to be culturally appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offer food pantries within walking distance of impacted communities• Funding for senior centers providing food & other necessary items (incontinence supplies)



SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT

CHALLENGES	SOLUTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Instability in hours/ closures impacts employee retention• Employee wages are not high enough to retain workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Direct assistance for small business who lost revenue, microloans• Incubators or mentorship programs for small business owners



CHILDCARE

CHALLENGES

- High cost of childcare and lack of childcare facilities
- Low wages for childcare workers
- Gaps in resources for teens - especially teens aging out of foster care or teens with limited family support
- Refugee and immigrant families often do not have families to help with childcare
- Trusting a new childcare provider during a pandemic is a potential barrier

SOLUTIONS

- Fund after school programs
- Enhance wages and benefits for childcare providers
- Provide technical assistance for childcare facilities
- Childcare cooperatives



BROADBAND

CHALLENGES

- Internet is an essential utility for school, working from home, applying for jobs, accessing resources
- Internet is important for refugee and immigrant communities to connect with family abroad
- Access to internet is more difficult in apartments


SOLUTIONS

- Decrease cost
- Increase quality, especially in older neighborhoods

RESULTS: ONLINE IDEA GENERATION PORTAL

This section of the report outlines the number of ideas submitted via the portal for different categories/approaches to each of the key areas of need. Responses were assigned to general categories - and many responses ended up falling under multiple categories since folks tended to offer more than one possible solution to the issues. Refer to Appendix A to find example responses for each category.

It is worth noting that we received the most responses to the housing availability and affordability question and the fewest responses to the small business support and food security questions. To be specific, 266 of the 315 total respondents submitted ideas for housing, 192 answered for mental health, 155 for food security, 136 for small business support, and 175 for childcare. It is possible that this decrease resulted from survey fatigue and does not represent how respondents felt about each key area of need.

 HOUSING AVAILABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY	
IDEA	RESPONSES
Increase availability of/access to affordable housing	81
Improve zoning code	36
Provide support and protection for renters	36
Build public/subsidized housing	28
Improve/expand homeless and emergency shelters	23
Reduced property taxes	19
Monitor/ban short term rentals	16
Improve public transportation	10
Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohousing/home sharing program • Provide incentives for developers • Fund solar panels/green energy improvements 	52

Respondents were generally in favor of using ARPA funding to increase the availability of affordable housing – though some respondents wanted to incentivize developers to build more affordable housing and others wanted the city to build more low-income public housing. There was also a significant focus on improving shelter options for people experiencing homelessness. Several respondents simply wanted ARPA funds used to lower property taxes, suggesting that we use the money for the city’s water and sewer infrastructure upgrades. Many respondents also wanted relaxed zoning restrictions so that homeowners could build tiny homes and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). There were several answers that highlighted the need for improved public transportation across the Treasure Valley. There were also several responses asking that transportation needs for the elderly and folks with mobility impairments be addressed.

About 30 responses suggested supporting existing organizations and programs, including:

- Jesse Tree
- The Boise Rescue Mission
- CATCH
- Boise City/Ada County Housing Authority
- LEAP Charities
- NeighborWorks Boise
- Our Path Home
- IBM Watson Care Manager
- Interfaith Sanctuary



MENTAL HEALTH

IDEA	RESPONSES
Improve access to mental health resources	39
Provide free or sliding scale therapy/counseling	32
Addiction and substance use treatment	19
Hire mental health and social workers as first responders	19
Improve/expand shelters and resources for people experiencing homelessness in our community	16
Community building and destigmatization of mental health	13
Promote health and wellness	12
Hire mental health workers at schools	10
Other <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Suicide prevention programs• Build mental health facility/treatment center	42

While a few respondents were opposed to ARPA funds being used for mental health resources, most were strongly in favor of addressing this issue in our community, pointing out that mental health is linked to several of the other key areas of need. Many respondents said that there is a need for more mental health providers and treatment centers. Others addressed the need for breaking down barriers that prevent people from accessing existing resources. These ideas included a mental health communication campaign from the city, building community centers or starting mentorship programs, and hiring mental health workers or social workers at schools. There were almost 20 respondents who wanted to ensure social workers were the ones responding to mental health crisis

calls or domestic violence calls instead of, or perhaps along with, police officers. Some suggested reallocating funding from the Boise Police Department (BPD) for this initiative, while others wanted BPD to hire social workers or other trained professionals from the mental health field.

Many people identified specific communities that have a greater need for mental health support:

- Healthcare workers
- Teachers and other essential workers
- Children
- LGBTQIA+ community, specifically trans and nonbinary youth
- People with disabilities
- Unhoused people
- Refugees
- Seniors
- Those in prison and formerly incarcerated people

A few responses suggested providing grants to or collaborating with existing organizations:

- Boys and Girls Club
- Genesis Community Health
- Valor Point (a permanent supportive housing unit focused on housing veterans who were previously experiencing chronic homelessness)



FOOD SECURITY

IDEA	RESPONSES
Improve or open new food banks/pantries	47
Create community gardens	24
Provide free school meals	15
Address food deserts	9
Provide nutrition/cooking classes	9
Enhance SNAP	8
Reduce transportation barriers	8
Address food waste	7
Other <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase collaboration between local farmers, restaurants, grocery stores, and food banks• Make a 'free' tent at the farmer's market	25

While less than half of respondents filled out this section, there were many responses in favor of using funds to alleviate food insecurity in Boise. Many respondents suggested either opening new food banks/pantries or providing funding to existing food banks. Folks also wanted ARPA funds used to provide free meals in schools, year-round. There were several responses advocating for community gardening projects that incorporated free nutrition/cooking classes. Respondents also wanted to address issues around food deserts, food waste, and transportation barriers when accessing affordable and healthy food. Many respondents wanted us to “keep it local” by supporting local farmers, preserving farmland in Boise, and partnering with local farmers, food banks, and non-profits to solve food insecurity.

When asking for expanded funding for local food banks, folks wanted to make sure funding was used to provide healthier and fresher food,

add locations, expand hours, expand delivery capability, and provide household/cleaning items. The food banks and other programs mentioned include:

- Idaho Foodbank
- St. Vincent de Paul
- United Way of the Treasure Valley
- Protect Idaho Kids
- Boise Mutual Aid
- Rolling Tomato
- Boise Urban Garden School (BUGS)
- Global Gardens



SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT

IDEA	RESPONSES
Provide grants for small businesses	33
Create training/mentorship programs for business owners	12
Loans for small businesses	10
Reduce taxes	9
Create job training programs for workers	8
Revitalize downtown/improve transportation	8
Other <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give local businesses preference in City of Boise purchases• Small business themed First Thursdays• Increase minimum wage	21

Less than half of respondents filled out the small business section, and there were a few people opposed to using ARPA funds for small businesses. However, there were many respondents who strongly supported providing grants and resources to Boise small businesses, especially when it comes to preserving/revitalizing our downtown and ensuring Boise residents who work at local businesses receive livable wages. A few respondents wanted the city to make downtown parking free and keep 8th street closed to cars. There were a few who suggested we prioritize giving grants or seed money to co-ops, BIPOC-owned businesses, and businesses that plan to spend the money on upgrades that will mitigate the spread of COVID-19.



CHILDCARE

IDEA	RESPONSES
Financial assistance to childcare facilities	29
Extra pay for childcare/education workers	27
Direct funding to families	21
New city-run childcare facility	18
Incentivize businesses to offer childcare	17
Financial assistance to schools	13
Reduce barriers to licensing daycare facilities	10
After school programs	7
Other <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initiative to get all Boise daycares STAR rated• Montessori programs	23

Less than half of the respondents filled out the childcare section, though only a few showed any opposition to spending ARPA funds on childcare. There was significant variety in the ideas suggested for improving childcare in Boise: grants for childcare facilities, after school programs, and schools; increased pay for childcare/education workers; subsidized childcare; incentives for businesses to offer childcare to their employees; and reduced barriers to licensing new daycare facilities. Several people were in support of establishing free, universal preschool at public schools in Boise. Some respondents wanted to make sure that funding for childcare facilities and schools specifically goes towards mitigating the spread of COVID-19.

COVID-19

While there was not a section in the survey addressing the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, several common suggestions arose out of the responses:

- Increase pay for healthcare workers, those who work in retirement homes, those who work in cemeteries, and other essential workers
- Provide more rapid testing sites
- Create pop-up vaccine clinics with a community-building focus
- Provide free masks
- Provide funding for businesses, schools, and childcare facilities to improve air ventilation and physical distancing

CONCLUSION

In general, the ideas, feedback, and recommendations shared in the listening sessions and through the online portal are similar to what we've been hearing in and from the community over the course of the last 18 months. Key callouts include: the need for more affordable housing, increased support for frontline and essential workers, improved access/removal of barriers to resources and information, enhanced support for small businesses, improved access to healthy and culturally appropriate food, and destigmatization/access to mental health resources.

The next step in the process for allocating ARPA funds will be to share this report with Mayor McLean and leadership to determine:

- If we can allocate funding quickly to impact needs in the community
- Short-term and long-term strategies to provide relief to our most vulnerable residents impacted by COVID-19
- Additional funding sources or partners who can support the needs of our residents

Once Mayor McLean and city leadership review the report, the Office of Community Engagement will develop the next round of community outreach to ensure that residents are informed on next steps and have the opportunity to collaborate on how we continue to support those most impacted by the pandemic.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A



HOUSING AVAILABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY

IDEA	RESPONSES
<p>INCREASE AVAILABILITY OF/ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Requirement for all multi-unit structures to have a percentage of low-income housing to keep it spread out.” • “Needed: Large amount of affordable senior specific housing. Small 500-600 sq ft, ADA equipped, one level apartments.” 	<p>81</p>
<p>IMPROVE ZONING CODE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Tiny houses should be a serious consideration, allowing ADUs, more spaces for RVs.” • “Reduce car dependent subdivisions and encourage more density and neighborhood friendly streets. There needs to be more of mixed housing options such as detached/semidetached houses, apartments and town homes.” 	<p>36</p>
<p>PROVIDE SUPPORT AND PROTECTION FOR RENTERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Provide more tenants' rights such that tenants have more time (e.g., two to three months) before they can be officially evicted.” • “Give tax breaks or incentives to property managers/owners who keep rental rates at 25% or more below the market rent and/or accept section 8. Install a rental increase cap so people can be prepared for how much their rent is going to go up each year - no more than 10% increase each year.” 	<p>36</p>



HOUSING AVAILABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY

IDEA	RESPONSES
<p>BUILD PUBLIC/SUBSIDIZED HOUSING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Build publicly owned housing affordable to the poorest Boiseans.” • “Build city owned low-income housing. Capitalism won’t work for this.” 	28
<p>IMPROVE/EXPAND HOMELESS AND EMERGENCY SHELTERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Boise is in desperate need to help the homeless. Money towards purchasing a hotel for the homeless would be ideal.” • “A large majority of these funds should be used to create scattered shelter sites throughout Boise to serve different populations that find themselves homeless due to drug abuse, mental illness, loss of employment, or personal health crises. Research shows that non-congregate shelter is the preferred model.” • “Create education campaigns for the public to understand the justification behind identified methods for alleviating homelessness, offer more pathways for community support and involvement, and rally the support of the community.” 	36
<p>REDUCED PROPERTY TAXES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Property taxes are a substantial burden for retired seniors in Boise.” • “Why not use the funds to invest in the upgrade of our water and sewer infrastructure. It would be a significant impact on affordability of housing if our utility bills do not have 9 % increases for 10 years to pay for a bond” 	19



HOUSING AVAILABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY

IDEA	RESPONSES
<p>MONITOR/BAN SHORT TERM RENTALS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Set policy on Air BnB units that either increases tax revenue from them for city to use towards affordable housing, and/or does not allow them to take up available inventory.”• “Incentives for landlords/homeowners to shift away from short term to long term rentals.”	16
<p>IMPROVE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Buses running at critical times of day to get those employed downtown to outlying communities which may have more affordable housing.”	10
<p>OTHER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Use funds to install solar panels in all Boise affordable housing projects.”• “Make housing vouchers for people with developmental disabilities when transitioning from institutional living to community living.”	52



MENTAL HEALTH

IDEA	RESPONSES
<p>IMPROVE ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Setting up a system for mental health providers, utilizing technology they already have for virtual mental health appointments but expanding upon it for deaf clients to utilize an ‘on screen’ sign language interpreter who can voice and sign would improve mental health access for the Deaf community.”• “Funding for hotlines.”	39
<p>PROVIDE FREE OR SLIDING SCALE THERAPY/ COUNSELING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Boys & Girls Clubs are currently providing free counseling from a licensed, professional counselor to any Boys & Girls Club member in need of mental health support.”• “Provide free therapy sessions to health care workers who worked through covid”	32
<p>ADDICTION AND SUBSTANCE USE TREATMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Implement a ‘harm reduction’ in treating substance use.”	19
<p>HIRE MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL WORKERS AS FIRST RESPONDERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Increase mobile mental health units in partnership with police so that there is appropriate response to domestic issues and mental health crises.”• “Divert funding from policing and put it towards social services that prevent crime and arrests. We need our social workers, first responders, care takers, and mental health professionals to be paid more and to get them involved the way police are in the streets responding immediately.”	19



MENTAL HEALTH

IDEA	RESPONSES
<p>IMPROVE/EXPAND SHELTERS AND RESOURCES FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS IN OUR COMMUNITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Connect with local shelter programs and provide mental health supports in connection with shelter programs for adults, teens and families.” 	16
<p>COMMUNITY BUILDING AND DESTIGMATIZATION OF MENTAL HEALTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We need a Mental Health Community Center in Boise.” 	13
<p>PROMOTE HEALTH AND WELLNESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Subsidized yoga via local YMCA” • “Very few things contribute to mental health more than getting regular exercise, especially in the outdoors. The group hardest hit by COVID-19 is seniors. The fastest growing sport among seniors is Pickleball... I can't imagine a better use for these dollars than to increase the number of pickleball courts around Boise.” 	12
<p>HIRE MENTAL HEALTH WORKERS AT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Increase access to mental health via public schools and community school programs” 	10
<p>OTHER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Connectivity to a park within 10 minutes of neighborhoods is a positive goal. Mental health services within 10 minutes would also be a valuable goal.” • “No better way to assist those experiencing mental health issues than to [ensure] they have safe housing.” 	42



FOOD SECURITY

IDEA	RESPONSES
<p>IMPROVE OR OPEN NEW FOOD BANKS/ PANTRIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Healthy food is hard to come by. The food banks seldom have fresh food.”• “Have more ‘stigma free’ grab and go food bank locations.”	47
<p>CREATE COMMUNITY GARDENS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Invest in acquisition of plots of land within the city to protect as community gardens; invest/ subsidize in local gardens and farms to grow crops specifically for those on food stamp or free food programs.”• “Sponsor community gardens in low-income residential areas and educate people on gardening skills, preparing and cooking vegetables, and nutrition.”	24
<p>PROVIDE FREE SCHOOL MEALS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Free school lunch and breakfast for every kid, weekend food bags available at schools.”• “Increased funding for school lunches. Need to be nutritious and no child should ever go hungry.”	15
<p>ADDRESS FOOD DESERTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Partner with Boise Farmers Market or local farmers directly to provide weekly produce baskets to qualified households.”• “Incentivize food retail developments in food desert neighborhoods through tax breaks, etc. Continue to promote mobile markets in neighborhoods outside of downtown to remove transportation barriers.”	9



FOOD SECURITY

IDEA	RESPONSES
PROVIDE NUTRITION/COOKING CLASSES <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “A community kitchen that provides free training and meals to the public.”	9
ENHANCE SNAP <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Increase the amount of food stamps our seniors get.”	8
REDUCE TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Fund and expand current food distribution efforts.”• “Enhance support for Boise Farmer's Mobile Market, helping strengthen our local food web.”	8
ADDRESS FOOD WASTE <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Resource waste and resource capture would be good to explore. I think individual restaurants and stores might make efforts, but aggregated collection and distribution might have a great impact.”	7
OTHER <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Develop a local food action plan that supports development of local agriculture and businesses.”• “Make several tents at the farmer's market 'free' for folks to come get fresh food (fruit, veggies, meats). Use this money to pay for the projects from the local farmers and businesses.”	25



SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT

IDEA	RESPONSES
<p>PROVIDE GRANTS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “I think cash assistance to businesses would be great, but it should be more wide ranging instead of just grants to pay for COVID related costs like last time.”• “Based upon the substantial financial relief that many of our local restaurants received recently... there are other service industries that have also been greatly negatively impacted by the pandemic. Hair Salons, as an example, are also completely dependent on making their living within brick-and-mortar walls.”	33
<p>CREATE TRAINING/MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS FOR BUSINESS OWNERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Work with business groups and small businesses to study best employment practices, specifically how to attract and keep employees. Then provide resources to help make those changes permanent.”	12
<p>LOANS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Underwrite/subsidize low interest loans for small businesses.”• “Micro-loans for refugee small business startups”	10
<p>REDUCE TAXES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Stop any implementation of new or expanded urban renewal areas as those only assist wealthy investors/ developers and increase the tax burden on everyone else, including small businesses.”	9
<p>CREATE JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR WORKERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Support of school to work internship programs.”	8



SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT

IDEA	RESPONSES
<p>REVITALIZE DOWNTOWN/IMPROVE TRANSPORTATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Offer relaxed parking fees downtown on weekends and certain hours in front of businesses. Offer city sponsored discount cards for loyalty and repeat customers and offer rewards and incentives for people to shop downtown - keep 8th street closed to cars!”• “Host quarterly ‘small business day’ and businesses can sign up and host events, deals, later hours (advertise, offer discounts/giveaways, make bus routes free this day, etc). could be done in conjunction with First Thursday.”	8
<p>OTHER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Give small local businesses preference in governmental purchases.”• “There is, in general, enough capital to go around so this need not be a city priority.”	21



CHILDCARE

IDEA	RESPONSES
<p>FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO CHILDCARE FACILITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Grants for starting daycare in town. Provide business training for daycare business models.”• “Grant program for small childcare providers for hiring bonuses, training, supplies, or capital improvements.”	29
<p>EXTRA PAY FOR CHILDCARE/ EDUCATION WORKERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Subsidize pay for childcare workers to ensure that small childcare facilities can hire and retain good workers.”	27
<p>DIRECT FUNDING TO FAMILIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Provide financing for quality childcare for families living in poverty.”• “A few hundred bucks a month for parents to help with childcare.”	21
<p>NEW CITY-RUN CHILDCARE FACILITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “I would LOVE to see a city-sponsored, 24/7 childcare center for people who make 80% AMI or less.”	18
<p>CREATE JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR WORKERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Support of school to work internship programs.”	17



IDEA	RESPONSES
<p>INCENTIVIZE BUSINESSES TO OFFER CHILDCARE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Financially help businesses who want to build on-site childcare facilities for workers. Ensure these businesses provide a living wage and benefits to on-site childcare workers.”• “Tax credits for employers who offer daycare.”	17
<p>FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Most obviously universal pre-k through all public schools and raise wages for teachers.”• “Please help schools and daycares implement the latest research on covid safety protocols. That means ventilation, high-quality filtration, and free N95 masks.”	13
<p>REDUCE BARRIERS TO LICENSING DAYCARE FACILITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Support small family childcare and make it easier to get zoning for up to 24 children. Not enough options for small childcare to expand. Too many roadblocks that don’t make sense.”	10
<p>AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Help to fund after school care and daily/weekly COVID-19 testing.”	7



CHILDCARE

IDEA	RESPONSES
<p>OTHER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “It is imperative that licensing be required, and that each facility is visited randomly to make sure the kids are safe.”• “A huge area where the city can move fast.”• “The city has no responsibility to provide childcare.”	23

