

## NEWS

# York has \$35 million in Covid recovery funds to give out : Here's how you can apply

**Katia Parks** York Daily Record

Published 3:58 p.m. ET Sep. 15, 2021 | Updated 8:10 a.m. ET Sep. 16, 2021

York has more than \$35 million in Covid relief funds to dole out over the next four years and on Wednesday, Mayor Michael Helfrich spelled out how residents, organizations and businesses can apply for a share of that.

"This year the U.S. Congress and President Biden approved the American Rescue Plan Act allocating \$35.3 million to the city of York to respond to the COVID-19 emergency and to bring back jobs," Helfrich said as he stood in front of city hall with members of a special Application Review and Recommending Committee .

The federal government wants the money to:

- Support urgent COVID-19 responses
- Replace money from taxes and fees lost during the pandemic
- Help immediately stabilize the economy
- Improve the public health system
- Tackle economic challenges, particularly in under-served communities.

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A recent survey by the city found the community's top priorities for this money are for:

- Public safety
- Healthy communities and neighborhoods
- Economic impact
- Education disparities
- Health care
- Broadband infrastructure

More specifically, people who answered the survey said the money would best be used to:

- Reduce violence
- Provide behavioral health counselors to assist police officers
- Help victims of violence
- Help people who are homeless
- Provide job training

"I'm excited to see so many of the things that are important to me that are on this list get approved of," said state Rep. Carol Hill Evans, a member of the review committee. "I would like to move the homelessness to No. 1 because we understand the importance of having a place that we can call home."

Madeline Torres Ocasio is also on the committee and works for the York City School District, which received \$35 million.

"There are a lot of programs that we need to bring back for our students to be successful. Hopefully we will be able to do so with this grant," Ocasio said of the city's fund.

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For those who want to apply for a grant, the committee developed an application process that begins on Sept. 22 and ends on Oct. 22.

The application includes 17 questions and a program budget. The questions will be centered around program and project approach, project outcomes, and fiscal controls.

"We are looking for grassroots, neighborhood associations, nonprofits, and businesses that can meet the federal requirements to apply," Helfrich said.

Mandatory application meetings, online and in-person, will be held on Sept. 22 and Sept. 29 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the city hall council chambers. Applicants need to attend only one meeting.

The committee will review applications and make recommendations to the mayor about who should receive money. The mayor will include a spending plan for this fund in the budget he submits to city council, which approves the budget in December.

"To everyone that is thinking about applying, this is a completely new slate," said Joan Maruskin, another member of the committee. "If you are an organization that applied before and have not gotten grants or have gotten grants, this is totally new, so do not let past history keep you from applying.

Please check the York City website for more information: <https://www.yorkcity.org/>

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