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**Date:** February 22nd, 2023  
**To:** Helena City Commission  
**From:** Helena Citizens Council

**Subject:** Recommendation re: ARPA Funding Allocation

Dear Mayor Collins and Commissioners Dean, Logan, Reed, and Shirliff,

**Thank you for making a portion of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding available to local organizations for projects to benefit our community.**

At the January 25, 2023, Helena Citizens Council (HCC) monthly meeting, the HCC reviewed the seven finalists the City has selected from among the many proposals submitted and wishes to make recommendations about how the nearly \$2.8M in remaining ARPA funding should be allocated.

HCC Representatives were surveyed from January 26-February 1, 2023, with 22 of the current 26 HCC Representatives responding. The poll results are attached and were briefly presented to the Commission by HCC Representative Pat Bik during the City Administrative meeting on February 1, 2023. (The HCC understands that the proposals were modified since the original Letters of Intent were submitted; however, the poll was conducted based on the original funding requests.)

**There were two project proposals that all respondents agreed upon: 1) Helena Food Share should be fully or at least partially funded; and 2) No funding should go towards the proposal for Carroll College stadium upgrades. Specifically:**

**Rocky Mountain Development Council housing proposal (\$2.4M)**

Fully or partially fund: 90.9%

Do not fund: 9.1%

**Family Promise facility expansion proposal (\$750,000)**

Fully or partially fund: 90.5%

Do not fund: 9.5%

**Helena Food Share Community Food Resource Center proposal (\$250,000)**

Fully or partially fund: 100%

**Carroll College football stadium upgrade proposal (\$1M)**

Do not fund: 100%

**Helena Regional Sports Association feasibility study (\$70,000)**

Fully or partially fund: 68.2%

Do not fund: 31.8%

**United Way of Lewis and Clark County for mobile hygiene and meal kit proposal request for \$500,000**

Fully or partially fund: 90.5%

Do not fund: 9.5%

**Tri-County Fire Safe Working Group wildfire assessment and education proposal request for \$120,000**

Fully or partially fund: 77.3%

Do not fund: 22.7%

The City laid out evaluation criteria for reviewing the community project proposals, namely:  
1) Contingency, if no funds awarded; 2) Proper management and financial controls are in place;  
3) Project readiness, feasibility, and plan; 4) Programs/projects that benefitting vulnerable populations;  
5) Public health and safety; 6) Programs/projects that improve quality of life; 7) Economic Development;  
8) Long-term project sustainability; 9) Committed matching funds ratio; and 10) Potential for transformational community impact.

**In conclusion, based on the evaluation criteria and the HCC survey results, the HCC recommends that the Commission:**

- 1. Prioritize funding for the Helena Food Share;**
- 2. Fully or partially fund proposals from the RMDC, Family Promise, Helena Regional Sports Association, United Way, and the Tri-County Fire Safe Working Group; and**
- 3. Not fund the Carroll College proposal.**

**The projects recommended for funding would benefit our community in the near and long term, helping make Helena a better community for all.**

Thank you for considering HCC's funding recommendations and the HCC looks forward to learning of your ARPA funding decisions.

Sincerely,

K.C. Cole Rosling, Chair  
Helena Citizens Council

Attachment: HCC ARPA Funding Survey Results

cc: Dannai Clayborn, Clerk of Commission  
Tim Burton, Interim City Manager  
Peggy Benkelman, HCC Coordinator  
HCC Representatives

# HCC Input re: Helena's \$2.8M in ARPA Funding

22 responses

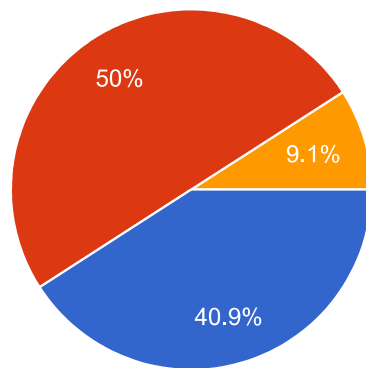
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## Rocky Mountain Development Council

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RMDC has requested \$2.4 million to offset the cost of building affordable housing on land now owned by Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church. RMDC, Helena Area Habitat for Humanity, and YWCA Helena intend to build 113 affordable and transitional housing units.

22 responses



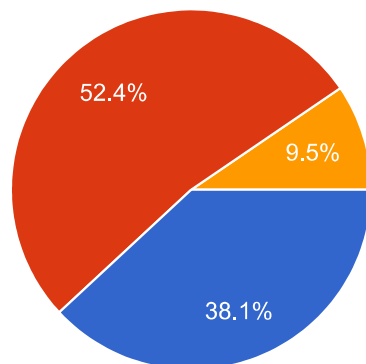
- Yes, I support full funding for this project.
- Yes, I support partial funding for this project.
- No, I do not support funding for this project.

## Family Promise

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Family Promise has requested \$750,000 to help fund an expansion of its facilities.

21 responses



- Yes, I support full funding for this project.
- Yes, I support partial funding for this project.
- No, I do not support funding for this project.

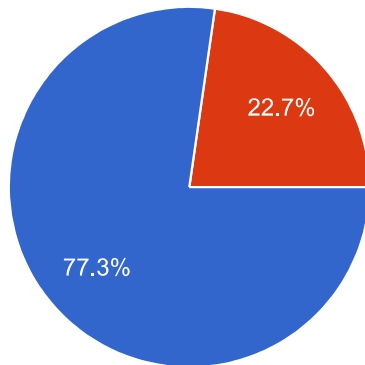


### Helena Food Share

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Helena Food Share has requested \$250,000 to help fund construction of a Community Food Resource Center.

22 responses



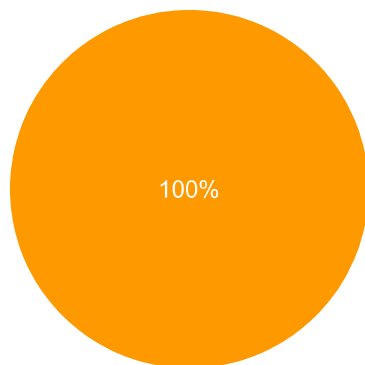
- Yes, I support full funding for this project.
- Yes, I support partial funding for this project.
- No, I do not support funding for this project.

### Carroll College

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Carroll College has requested \$1M to offset the costs of upgrades to its football stadium.

22 responses



- Yes, I support full funding for this project.
- Yes, I support partial funding for this project.
- No, I do not support funding for this project.

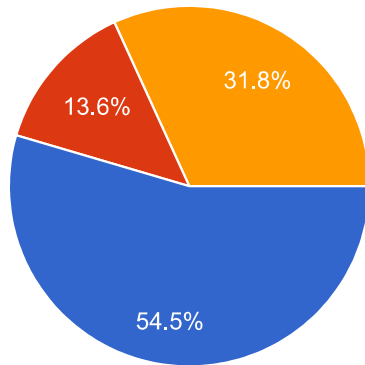


### Helena Regional Sports Association



HRSA has requested \$70,000 to pay for a feasibility study for its long envisioned multi-sport complex that could include an indoor swimming pool.

22 responses



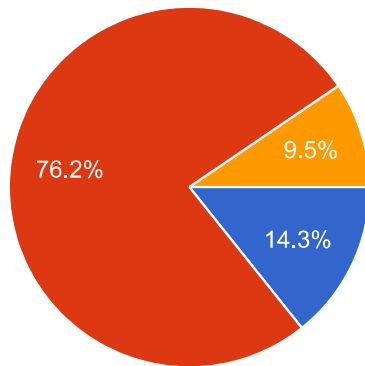
- Yes, I support full funding for this project.
- Yes, I support partial funding for this project.
- No, I do not support funding for this project.

### United Way of Lewis and Clark County



United Way has requested \$500,000 to purchase mobile hygiene and meal preparation units.

21 responses



- Yes, I support full funding for this project.
- Yes, I support partial funding for this project.
- No, I do not support funding for this project.

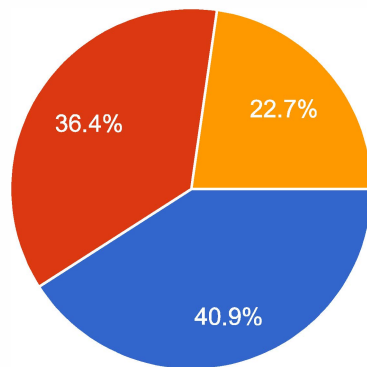


## Tri-County Fire Safe Working Group



TCFSWG has requested \$120,000 to pay for a Helena homeowners wildfire risk assessment and education program.

22 responses



- Yes, I support full funding for this project.
- Yes, I support partial funding for this project.
- No, I do not support funding for this project.

**Anything else you'd like to add?** 4 responses- These member comments were submitted as personal comments, not a part of the HCC Recommendation as stated above.

Carroll College is a well endowed, private, religious institution. I do not think scarce city monies should be spent on a Carroll College project, especially for a college sports arena. The ARPA funds derive from the American Rescue Plan, which was designed to help local governments meet the unmet community needs due to pandemic disruptions. All of the projects relate to critical community needs with the single exception of the Carroll College stadium project. I recommend NO funding for Carroll.

We do not need public funds spent to subsidize yet another sports related facility, let alone a privately operated one. I hope real consideration is given to the Tri-County proposal as it is only a matter of time before Helena has a disastrous fire in our residential neighborhoods. For the amount requested, it's money well spent. Other than Tri-County, I'd rate the Rocky Mountain proposal to the top as affordable housing is needed in our city. Lots of good projects so all the best in your deliberations and allocations.

I believe these ARPA funds should be focused on supporting, funding and improving the lives of those who are experiencing homelessness, , hunger, income disparity or other burdens affecting their basic needs. Basically how can we use these funds for our community following the 'greatest good for the largest group of people' ideal.

I believe the ARPA funds should go to organizations that serve the greatest good for the greatest number - those in need of our community's support for food, shelter, etc. (Private institutions have other sources of funding and should pursue those rather than request public funding. I support full or partial funding for all but the request to publicly subsidize the Carroll College stadium upgrades. That's better for alumni and booster clubs. I've heard that most of the Carroll faculty don't support this request.)

# Google Forms

