

Attachment "D"  
Public Comments - Received through  
January 14, 2022

July 30, 2021

To whom it may concern:

We, the community of Cantua Creek, are pleading for help. Our homes are completely vulnerable in case of a fire and we need access to a fire department. The situation is bad and some insurance companies no longer want to insure our properties for the high risk of loss, and the ones that do insure them are charging us excessive fees that are very tough to afford. They do this for the reason that our homes are considered total loss in the case of a fire due to not having access to a fire station nearby. We are truly grateful for anything that can be done to help this community in great need.

Nosotros, la comunidad de Cantua Creek, pedimos ayuda. Nuestras casas están completamente vulnerables en causa de incendio y necesitamos acceso a servicio de bomberos. La situación es seria porque algunas compañías de seguros ya no quieren asegurar nuestras propiedades por el alto riesgo de pérdida, y las que sí las aseguran nos cobran tarifas excesivas que son muy difíciles de pagar. Lo hacen por la razón de que nuestras viviendas se consideran pérdida total en caso de incendio por no tener acceso a una estación de bomberos cercana. Estamos realmente agradecidos por cualquier cosa que se pueda hacer para ayudar a esta comunidad tan necesitada.

Thank you

Selva Zomora 15858 Santa clara Av

~~Alberto~~ 15858 Santa clara Ave. Cantua creek, CA 93608

Raquel Gyzman 15872 Santa clara Ave. Cantua creek, CA 93608

Amalia Gyzman 15944 Santa clara Av.

Humberto Gyzman 15944 Santa clara Av.

Salvador Gyzman 15872 Santa clara st.

Jose Robles 15944 Santa clara Av.

Juana Medina

29544 HIDALGO CANTUA

Maricela Mendoza

29518 W Latta cantua creek

Selva mendez

29518 W Latta cantua creek

Josma Padilla ~~PO~~ Santa Clara 15906  
Gloria Padilla 15906 Santa Clara Ave

✓ Santa Miron 15914 Santa Clara Ave Cantua Creek  
CA 93608

Olga Diaz 29522 W. HIDALGO ave Cantua Creek

Alexandra John Diaz 29521 cantua creek 559 829-9701

Laura Bonte 29524 cantua Creek 559-260-4405

Orlinda Gannon 29521 Hidalgo St  
~~Proprietor~~

✓ Adrian Cordero ~~29521~~ 29521 W Hidalgo Ave

Daniel R. Martinez 29569 W. Hidalgo Ave Cantua Creek

Martin Valencia 29581 W Hidalgo Ave Cantua Creek

Veronica Valencia 29581 W Hidalgo Ave. Cantua Creek CA. 93608

Martin Valencia Jr 29581 W Hidalgo Ave. Cantua Creek

Rahuel H 29580 W. Hidalgo Ave. Cantua Creek CA

Cesar Diazquez

~~29580~~ I.g. ~~M~~ Irma Gonzalez

Bertha Hernandez 29586 Hidalgo

Natalia Hernandez 29586 Hidalgo

Arnolfo Fierros 29586 Hidalgo

Alina Hernandez Nancy Sanchez ~~29586~~ Chappo  
15893

MARIA HERNANDEZ Juana Martinez 15893 Chappo

Sonia Hernandez RAQUEL PULES 15885 Chappo Cantua

Edlin Flores

José Perez

Aracely dias

ETDY JAREZ

Josefa Queta 15892 Chappo

Cantua Creek CA

93608

Dionicio Cabrera 15909, Dominginis. Cantua  
Gloria Gaytan 15909. Domingine Cantua  
Maria Mejia 29555 Hidalgo St. Cantua Creek  
Jose Medina 29555 Hidalgo Street  
Gabriel Medina 29555 Hidalgo Street  
Oscar Aguilar 29576 W Latta Cantua

Mariano Viloria  
15884 Santa Clara Ave  
Cantua Creek CA 93608  
Oscar Aguilar 15884 Santa Clara Ave  
Cantua Creek CA 93608

Reyna Lopez 29535 West Hidalgo  
Cantua Creek Ca. 93608  
Antonio Cabrera. 15936 Santa Clara Ave  
Cantua Creek. Ca. 93608 - 559-210-2042

Sonyeo Barajas Vidal. 15928 Santa Clara Ave  
Cantua Creek 93608

Carlos Sanchez 29539 W. Latta Ave.  
Carlos Marmolejo 27922 W Mountain View Ave  
Cantua Creek CA

Alex Mohsen 16039 S Derrick Ave  
Cantua Creek, CA 93608  
Alvaro S Aguirre 29035 W Clarkson  
Cantua Creek CA 93608  
Jose Aguirre 29043 W Clarkson  
Cantua Creek CA 93608

Jesus Gony 29523 WEST LATA CANTUA CREEK  
Cindy Balzetta 29528 West Latta Ave Cantua Creek  
manuel Garcia 29536 W. LATA CANTUA CREEK CA 93608

Roberto Gomez 29520

Jose Gomez  
Celia Reyes

Celsa Arvalo

Ruben Lopez

29640 Terrado

Cantua Creek

Mariana Rodriguez

15916 S Terrado

Cantua Creek

Cecilia Barrantes

Anelia Lino

29641 Hidalgo

Cantua Creek

Raquel Gutierrez

29653 Hidalgo

Cantua Creek, CA

93608

~~X MARTIN LOPEZ / 15891~~

Santa Crava RV

Cantua Creek

Sonia E Mendoza

29580 W Latta Cantua  
Creek 93608

Karla M Mercado

Jose M Mendoza

R. G. M.

Jose M Cruz

Salvador Villalobos

15916 South Terrado

Cantua Creek CA

15938 Ave Terrado

Cantua Creek  
CA 93608

Celia Torres

29652 Hidalgo

Cantua Creek Calif 93608

Horacio Martinez

29652 Hidalgo

Cantua Creek CA, 93608

Genevieve Alvarez

29652 Hidalgo

Cantua Creek CA 93608

~~X Madalena Lopez~~

Celida Ochoa

(559) 3075425

16127 S. Demick

Cantua Creek Cal 93608

Los Bomberos tardaron

como-30-minutos en llegar.

Todo- se fue como.

Jose E. Arzate Fernandez 29685 W. Latta  
Cantua Creek CA

Leticia E. Fernandez 29685 W. Latta  
Cantua Creek CA 93608

Anais Silva - 16145 S. Demick Ave, Cantua Creek  
TEL. 559-246-4843

Jose Luna Salasón TRÉS PIERNAS

Por medio de la presente SOLICITAMOS Bomberos en la comunidad  
de tres piernas

Porque Perdi mi Toyota Carros Motus CANTUA

Mis mascotas se quemaron y en estos momentos estoy

8/1/2021

A Qui Fuera del Terreno

**From:** [Juana Gomez](#)  
**To:** [ARPA](#)  
**Subject:** Electricity  
**Date:** Friday, August 6, 2021 9:04:05 AM

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CAUTION!!! - EXTERNAL EMAIL - THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK

Hi we're can I get help paying my pg&e bill  
Sent from my iPhone



08/24/2021

Attn: Fresno County Board of Supervisors

Cc: Supervisor Brian Pacheco, Vice Chairman, District1@fresnocountyca.gov

Supervisor Steve Brandau, Chairman, District2@fresnocountyca.gov

Supervisor Sal Quintero, District3@fresnocountyca.gov

Supervisor Buddy Mendes, District4@fresnocountyca.gov

Supervisor Nathan Magsig, District5@fresnocountyca.gov

Good morning Board of Supervisors,

My name is Kao Lao and I am the Civic Engagement Table Coordinator for Central Valley United for Power (also known as CV-UP). I am here to speak on behalf of CV-UP. CV-UP is a coalition of eight community based organizations and they are: 99 Rootz/Power California; Californians for Justice; The Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment; Community Water Center; Dolores Huerta Foundation; Faith in the Valley; Hmong Innovating Politics; and Leadership Counsel for Justice & Accountability. We build inclusionary and transformative people power across eight counties, which are Kings, Kern, Tulare, Fresno, Madera, Merced, Stanislaus, and San Joaquin.

CV-UP supports the following investments that are listed in the County of Fresno 2021 Recovery Plan Performance Report: on-going support for the COVID-19 response efforts, community wellness, homelessness, and water/wastewater infrastructure. In addition, we ask that all of you support ARPA funds to be invested in utility payments, food access, youth investment, environmental justice, affordable housing preservation and production, homeownership opportunities for low-income households; and improvement on basic infrastructure (such as water, wastewater, and broadband) in disadvantaged communities in Fresno County.

To ensure the success of these efforts, it is necessary for the county to establish and uphold meaningful community engagement with local community-based organizations and community members during the planning, implementing, and evaluation phases to ensure that the needs, concerns, and wants of our diverse community are addressed.



In addition, CV-UP wants to assert that no federal funds should be used for punishment in any way - meaning law enforcement, juvenile facilities, probation, or adult jails. We encourage the Board of Supervisors to chart a new path forward by equitably funding the futures of Fresno County through this historic opportunity. Thank you.

Sincerely,

The Central Valley United for Power Coalition & its members:

Californians for Justice

Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment

Community Water Center

Dolores Huerta Foundation

Faith in the Valley

Hmong Innovating Politics

Leadership Counsel for Justice & Accountability

Power California- 99Rootz



| [info.cvup@gmail.com](mailto:info.cvup@gmail.com)

## **Item 7 - American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Update**

Hello,

Good morning. My name is Rosario Rodríguez. I am commenting on Item 7.

I am a resident of the Three Rocks community, we are located more or less 60 miles from the city of Fresno, as you can see, we are very far from all services (clinics, food stores, clothing stores and schools) we know that there is a fund of \$194 million for improvements of our communities. To me personally and speaking for the needs of my community I would like that part of that money be used to provide us with public transportation knowing that many people do not drive and it is very difficult to go to medical appointments. It is really a great need because everyone should have access to personal care and due to lack of transportation, we have to miss appointments.

We also have the community park called El Porvenir that instead of a park it seems like a forgotten land where our children and young people, far from being safe, go to have fun, but are exposed to accidents because it is very deteriorated. It would be fabulous if they could also invest in the park that it is the only place in the community for our young people, children and adults to enjoy a safe and pleasant afternoon. Attached are pictures of our park to highlight the need for renovations.

I hope you take our needs into consideration and do not forget us when making the decision on how to distribute and invest this money. Thank you in advance, I hope for results!

Rosario Rodriguez  
El Porvenir/Three Rocks Resident



El Porvenir Park, August 2021



El Porvenir Park, August 2021

Hello,

My name is Esther Ramirez. I am commenting on Item 7.

I reside in Cantua Creek. My concerns are as follows:

1. The ongoing water project is needed to provide the community with potable water. Will the money for this project be enough to make sure a water filtration system is also built? If the allotment of the grant doesn't cover the projects being built, will the projects stop?
2. The \$194 million allocated to Fresno County needs to be used in the CSA 30 and 32 for the continuation of improvements on the roads, safety and community staples, such as parks, cooling center. Also, can there be an allotment for the operation and maintenance of the potable water system to avoid an increase of the water costs.

Thank you to Mr. Pacheco for your support and representation of our communities.

Sincerely,  
Esther Ramirez

\* \* \* \* \*

Hola buenos dias,

Mi nombre es Esperanza Cendejas, vivo por la calle Cherry y Britten y tengo 5 años viviendo aquí. Quiero apoyar a mis vecinos para que arreglen la calle Britten Avenida que está por la Cherry entre la Central y América, y también la calle al sur de Britten que no tiene nombre. Nos afecta visitar a alguien que vive ahí porque no se puede caminar porque cuando llueve se inunda y no es posible caminar. Les pido que nos ayuden arreglar esta callecita.

Sinceramente,  
Esperanza Cendejas

\* \* \* \* \*

**My name is Renatto Maroquin:**

I am a resident of the Britten Ave community. I am commenting on Item 7 regarding where funds from the American Rescue Plan should be allocated. I would like to see funding spent on the paving of Britten Ave. This road is all dirt and serves as the only entrance/exit to an entire community.

During the rainy season Britten Ave becomes a swamp. The puddles are deep and large, up to about 50ft long by 10ft wide. It's near impossible to drive through. If you do attempt to drive a car through the flooded road, your vehicle may get stuck. If it doesn't get stuck the water floods into the engine compartment and your car will smell like rotting grass for days. Please consider paving this road. Thank you.

**My name is Panfilo Cerrillo.**

I am a resident of South Central Fresno and reside on East Ave. I would like to see ARPA funds spent on the following issues:

- Britten Ave residents need this road paved and more attention and funding needs to be put towards solutions to solve their water crisis as most wells are either dry, near dry, or are toxic.
- There needs to be more communication efforts from elected officials with their constituents through community engagement. ARPA funds can be used to pay for a communications program like Zoom, so that residents can actually engage with their elected officials during Board of Supervisor hearings.
- More communications between the City and County of Fresno agencies regarding the industrial project developments that are occurring within South Central Fresno communities that are in the sphere of influence of the city but are still part of the county. Permits are being given to projects without any consideration for the environmental impacts. There needs to be a coordinated planning committee that is truly reviewing all of these projects before permits are issued.
- Illegal Dumping is a major concern on Orange and East Avenues, south of Central Ave. These ARPA funds could pay for vouchers for curbside pick up for tires and large trash items, or a voucher for individual dumpster delivery. Similar to the city of Fresno annual free dump / trash pick up campaign
- Safety: There are not enough Sheriff deputies assigned to cover such a large regional area of South Fresno county. Due to the large geographic coverage area, the response time in case of an emergency is extremely slow.
- Animal Control: While it may be a 'rural' area, uncontrolled and loose dogs are a problem and dangerous to families and children. Would like to see funding allocated to improve the animal control services.



Britten Avenue





Britten Avenue



July 29, 2021

Attn: Board of Supervisors  
Fresno County Hall of Records  
2281 Tulare Ave. #301  
Fresno, CA 93721

Cc: Supervisor Brian Pacheco, Vice Chairman, [District1@fresnocountyca.gov](mailto:District1@fresnocountyca.gov)  
Supervisor Steve Brandau, Chairman, [District2@fresnocountyca.gov](mailto:District2@fresnocountyca.gov)  
Supervisor Sal Quintero, [District3@fresnocountyca.gov](mailto:District3@fresnocountyca.gov)  
Supervisor Buddy Mendes, [District4@fresnocountyca.gov](mailto:District4@fresnocountyca.gov)  
Supervisor Nathan Magsig, [District5@fresnocountyca.gov](mailto:District5@fresnocountyca.gov)  
County Administrative Officer Jean M. Rousseau, [jrousseau@fresnocountyca.gov](mailto:jrousseau@fresnocountyca.gov)

**RE: Fresno County Budget and American Rescue Plan Act Allocations**

Dear Fresno County Board of Supervisors,

Thank you for your time and diligence in reviewing our letter elevating the issues and solutions



residents throughout the County have raised. The undersigned organizations write to you to advocate for a budget that is equitable, inclusive, and responsive to disadvantaged communities' needs. We are a group of community-based organizations working hand-in-hand with community partners and leaders throughout Fresno County. Collectively, we work with several communities and hundreds of residents on issues folks deem most important. This includes, but is not limited to, access to affordable housing, safe and affordable water and wastewater services, climate justice, clean air, and quality transportation and transit services.

The convergence of the global pandemic, widespread economic uncertainty, and the ensuing clarion call for racial justice has led to a historic and unprecedented moment for righting some of the most persistent and pervasive challenges; such as, the ever increasing racial wealth gap, divestment in underserved communities, and disparate health impacts resulting from racially motivated practices and patterns (i.e., placing unwanted land uses in communities of color, limiting where nonwhite households could live, etc.). Though the issues are seemingly endless, the moment has also created opportunity for innovative leadership to lessen the gaps and impacts, and atone for the historic injustices placed on black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) communities.

For too long, we have treated our young people & communities of color as disposable, and we cannot afford to let the opportunity to support our most vulnerable go to waste. As this board moves forward with allocating public funds, including the unprecedented \$194M from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), the undersigned organizations urge you to (1) create and implement a meaningful participatory public process where the public has a direct say into how these dollars should be spent, and (2) prioritize new investments in communities hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic—particularly young people of color, immigrants, refugees, and rural disadvantaged unincorporated communities. Moreover, we ask the board to fulfill the following budget requests identified by the communities we partner with that will address some of their primary concerns.

## **I. Parks and Community Resilience Centers**

- A. Allocate \$15 million for park constructions and improvements in disadvantaged parts of Fresno County.** As the pandemic highlighted, investments in healthy green and open space are critical for community well-being. They provide recreational spaces for communities to support their mental and physical health, while also creating spaces for community members to share and access resources, and increasing Fresno County's tax base as they increase property values and attract quality businesses. Lush green space also lessens the impacts of climate change like heat reduction and reduces pollution from our atmosphere and groundwater. These dollars could leverage other public and private sources, like the Statewide Parks Program, to

support park development.

These investments must prioritize and partner with BIPOC communities who have the least access to green or open space. Specifically, this allocation must include renovations in El Porvenir, Lanare, and Calwa's parks, which have not seen investments in several decades making these spaces unusable. Both, El Porvenir and Lanare parks, have severely dilapidated play structures that are completely unusable. Calwa Park also has an empty pit for a pool as funding was never fully allocated to renovate this blue space, which provides life-saving skills and a place to cool down. Calwa and Lanare have basketball courts and soccer fields in need of update. This includes resurfacing the pavement, receding the grass, and updating the irrigation system. Investments should also include walking loops around the parks. Additionally, monies should also fund construction of a neighborhood park in Cantua Creek.

**B. Allocate \$20 million to create Community Resilience Centers in rural disadvantaged communities.** With record breaking heat waves across the Central Valley, we must acknowledge and address the fact that climate change and its impacts are not impacting everyone the same. Lower-income communities are suffering in sweltering heat and blackouts putting everyone, especially elderly, infant, and immunocompromised populations, at grave risk.

The need for community resilience centers that can act as cooling centers in the summer and heating spaces in the winter has never been more evident. During the pandemic, communities who have community gathering spaces were quick to mobilize mask-distribution events, vaccination clinics in hard to reach communities, and food drives to support families in need. Adequately updated Community Resilience Centers can act as spaces to cool down or warm up in extreme weather conditions or power outages, provide the necessary gathering space for urgent situations, and generally provide a place for social cohesion.

We specifically ask this board to allocate funding to renovate existing spaces in Cantua Creek, Lanare, and Calwa to be turned into Community Resilience Centers. Meanwhile these facilities are renovated and constructed, these funds should also go towards short-term solutions to ensure residents in rural communities have these life-saving resources as soon as possible. This could potentially include community-identified solutions like portable A/C and heating units. These spaces are necessary and will serve residents beyond just these communities, as they already are used as a gathering space for many. For instance, the current community center in Lanare serves the community through food distributions, mobile COVID testing, and

vaccine clinics. Yet it entirely lacks basic necessities such as cooling and heating making it difficult to use this space in times of extreme weather events.

## **II. Healthcare Services**

**A. Allocate \$10 million to construct and staff a fire station in or near the rural community of Cantua Creek and El Porvenir**, which is far from fire services and, as wildfires continue to accelerate this remains a necessity. The residents in Cantua Creek currently pay high home insurance rates and are not guaranteed that their family and home will be safe throughout the year.

**B. Allocate \$5 million for a mobile clinic** that will bring health services to disadvantaged communities in rural parts of Fresno County. These are areas that do not have easy access to important, life-saving medical or healthcare services. Many rural County residents don't have access to reliable or efficient transportation, making what would be an hour or more drive, several hours just to get to a medical appointment.

Residents have shared how these services were provided in the past and as we are in the midst of a global pandemic the need to bring these services back is crucial. As the pandemic highlighted, it is essential to bring services, like mobile testing and vaccinations to these communities. This program can and should be modeled and complement the current COVID vaccination efforts that have brought mobile and pop-up clinics to rural Fresno County.

## **III. Basic Infrastructure**

**A. Allocate \$20 million for road maintenance and complete streets** prioritizing low-income communities with the longest deferred maintenance. Residents have seen minimal—if any—transportation related improvements. Streets in disadvantaged unincorporated communities like Lanare, Cantua Creek, El Porvenir, Tombstone, and fringe communities in South Central Fresno have not seen improvements in decades. Many even lack basic signage identifying the street they are on. Additionally, street lighting in Lanare, Cantua Creek, El Porvenir, and Tombstone are dim or nonexistent. The years of disregard worsened with heavy-duty truck traffic, flooding from no drainage, and band-aid solutions have resulted in street conditions that wear down cars quicker and are not conducive to active modes of transportation like biking or walking.

Specifically the community roads residents have elevated are:

- Lanare: Community streets along Grantland, Garfield, and Chateau Avenue.
- Cantua Creek: Latta, Hidalgo, Domengine, Terrado, Chappo, and Santa Clara

Avenue which have deteriorated over the years especially recently through the current water project. Safe routes to school leading to Cantua Creek Elementary.

- El Porvenir: El Progreso Avenue where certain homes experience heavy flooding.
- Tombstone: Fairbanks, Tinoco, Cottle, and Greenwood Avenue.
- South Central Fresno: Cherry Avenue from American to North Avenues, Central from Highway 41 to 99, and Britten Avenue and the back road on Cherry Avenue.

With the various sources of competitive and formulaic funding available at every level of government, we urge the Board of Supervisors to direct staff in systematically addressing street improvements in communities with the highest needs. This means prioritizing disadvantaged communities where largely vulnerable populations reside and safe routes to school. We recognize this county is vast and has several miles of deferred maintenance and general basic infrastructure improvements, but this is why we ask for an objective approach that listens to community needs to ensure we're equitably investing our limited resources.

**B. Allocate \$50 million for water, wastewater, clean energy infrastructure and appliances, and broadband infrastructure in disadvantaged communities.** The County must allocate local resources to leverage state investments for critical, basic needs including drinking water and wastewater infrastructure, clean energy infrastructure and appliances to support both energy reliability and environmental stewardship, and broadband to ensure every household in Fresno County has access to reliable internet. The global pandemic - that hit lower income and rural Fresno communities hardest - reinforced the unmet basic needs facing so many residents. Lack of access to safe drinking water, reliable clean energy, and internet service can be life-threatening - more so when isolated and vulnerable communities are cut off from existing life lines as they were through much of 2020.

#### **IV. Affordable Housing and Community Planning**

**A. \$15 million dollars to support affordable housing preservation and production, and homeownership opportunities for low-income households.** Many people mistakenly assume the Central Valley is a region with vast affordable housing options. However, as is demonstrated by CalEnviroScreen data, Fresno County suffers from high housing burden rates, meaning that most households pay well over 30% of their income towards housing. As we have it, tenants not only deal with unaffordable costs, but also with poor quality housing stock. This leaves families struggling every month to pay their bills while dealing with poor housing conditions like mold, leaky pipes, and pest infestation.

With ARPA funding leveraged by local and state dollars, the County has a rare opportunity to do something and support its disadvantaged unincorporated residents to attain quality affordable housing. This set aside should be used, though not limited to, support gap financing in affordable housing projects, rehabilitation grants or loans to renovate our affordable housing stock, and programs to foster homeownership opportunities.

- B. Assign \$3 million to conduct community, specific, and climate action plans.** As stated above, Fresno County is in a housing crisis restricting residents' spending power as over a third of their income goes towards rent or mortgage payments. Currently, the State has allocated billions of dollars and has allocated billions more to support localities' efforts to house folks who are unhoused and build more affordable units. In order for the County to be prepared to disburse formulaic dollars and be competitive in others, it's necessary to develop local plans that will facilitate affordable housing developments. The County cannot continue relying on the private market to build more housing units, but must proactively work towards that end goal.

Additionally, per AB 379, local jurisdictions must integrate climate adaptation into their general plans by January 1, 2022. To comply with State law, we urge the County to allocate part of these dollars to develop a countywide Climate and Emergency Preparedness Plan. This plan will ensure that as climate change-induced disasters, such as wildfires, drought, and extreme heat, worsen, the County will have plans in place to protect its residents, especially the most vulnerable populations.

## V. Youth Investment

- A.** We support youth-based organizations advocacy requesting the County to invest in underserved youth and young adults. It is critical to ensure Fresno County's young populations are provided with the resources and opportunities to learn, develop, and engage. This includes, but is not limited to, providing a guaranteed income for disadvantaged youth, especially those exiting the foster care system; investing in a participatory budgeting process that engages youth and other stakeholders; and divesting from facilities and programs that punish young people.

\* \* \* \* \*

This past year is one we must not forget simply because a sense of normalcy is in sight after the deadly pandemic. We cannot forget the tens of thousands of lives lost disproportionately impacting BIPOC populations destabilizing their housing situation, widening the wealth gap between white and non-white households, and further setting BIPOC students back relative to their white classmates. We must not forget the continuous lynching of BIPOC bodies, especially

black men and women, and the civil unrest where millions of Americans demanded for equal treatment and accountability of our local governments and police departments.

Again, we ask that the FY21-22 Budget be done through a transparent, meaningful, and responsive participatory process and ensure significant investments in community-identified priorities including but not limited to those listed above. In allowing communities, who have long been overlooked, lead way ensures the County equitably invests their resources, acknowledges and addresses historical injustices, and sets a new tone that puts communities first.

Sincerely,

Mariana Alvarenga & Grecia Elenes  
*Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability*

Nayamin Martinez  
*Central California Environmental Justice Network*

Socorro Santillan  
*Planned Parenthood Mar Monte*

Sandra Celedon  
*Building Healthy Communities*

Laura Moreno & Linda Calvillo  
*Friends of Calwa*

Kevin Hamilton  
*Central California Asthma Collaborative*

Isabel Solorio  
*Community United in Lanare*

Julia Mendoza  
Blanca Gomez  
Carolina Garcia  
*Fresno County Resident*

**From:** [Kao Lao](#)  
**To:** [ARPA](#)  
**Subject:** CV-UP community comment on APRA funds  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 24, 2021 4:15:40 PM  
**Attachments:** [CV-UP 08.24.2021 Public Comment @ Fresno BOS.pdf](#)

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**CAUTION!!! - EXTERNAL EMAIL - THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK**

Greetings,

I'd made a public comment at the Fresno County Board of Supervisors meeting on 08/24/2021. I wanted to email my public comment to the county for record keeping. Below and attached is my public comment regarding APRA funds.

My name is Kao Lao and I am the Civic Engagement Table Coordinator for Central Valley United for Power (also known as CV-UP). I am here to speak on behalf of CV-UP. CV-UP is a coalition of eight community based organizations and they are: 99 Rootz/Power California; Californians for Justice; The Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment; Community Water Center; Dolores Huerta Foundation; Faith in the Valley; Hmong Innovating Politics; and Leadership Counsel for Justice & Accountability. We build inclusionary and transformative people power across eight counties, which are Kings, Kern, Tulare, Fresno, Madera, Merced, Stanislaus, and San Joaquin.

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Californians for Justice

Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment

Community Water Center

Dolores Huerta Foundation

Faith in the Valley

Hmong Innovating Politics

Leadership Counsel for Justice & Accountability

Power California- 99Rootz

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Kao Cheng (Kaocheng) Lao / She, Her, Hers

Civic Engagement Table Coordinator

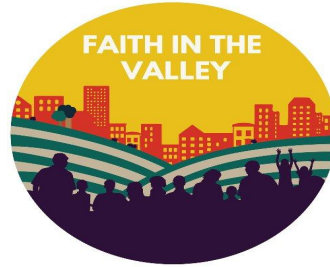
Central Valley United for Power

704-773-0683

Follow us on [Facebook](#) & [instagram](#)

*"We rise by lifting others."*





October 25, 2021

Department of Public Works and Planning  
2220 Tulare St. 8th Floor  
Fresno, CA 93721

**RE: Fresno County ARPA Outreach & Engagement Plan**

Dear Mr. Johnson,

We are a group of community-based organizations submitting the following recommendations to the County to ensure the County is meaningfully engaging residents and including public feedback in the ARPA allocation process. Our recommendations are based on our collective depth of experience working alongside Fresno County communities and noting what engagement strategies have worked for residents. We look forward to working together to elevate and include residents' feedback in this crucial process.

1. Host in-person and virtual meetings/workshops to share ARPA funding guidelines. Schedule and publicize meeting dates, locations, and times 14 days in advance.
  - a. Examples of opportunities to publicize events: post on social media, ask small water systems to include meeting notices in water bills, post notices outside community centers, contact foreign language media (e.g., Univision, Hmong TV, Radio Bilingue), utilize public schools' robo-call systems and/or send flyers home with students, use the U.S mail, canvass hard-to-reach communities, partner with CBOs, prepare radio and television announcements, etc.
    - i. Upon request, Leadership Counsel can provide a contact list of CBOs, social media pages, and other contacts to send out notices of workshops. Please contact Mariana Alvarenga.

- ii. Here are a few social media accounts to start with: [Unidos por un mejor Fresno](#), [Comunidad Unida](#), [Calwa FB Page](#)
  - b. Hybrid workshops should be scheduled to allow residents to gather in person (with COVID precautions) or attend virtually.
  - c. Create materials/flyers in primary languages including, but not limited to, Spanish, Hmong, and Punjabi. Ensure that the language used is understandable and culturally relevant. We encourage working with community groups or CBOs to provide feedback on draft materials.
  - d. Interpreters must be available at meetings in the above languages or any other language spoken in the community, including American Sign Language.
  - e. Allow people who connect virtually to ask questions and engage at the same level as in-person attendees.
    - i. Mail or email necessary materials beforehand to registered attendees, such as the presentation and resources. (Allow anyone to join the day of the meeting).
  - f. Fresno County must coordinate with youth-focused organizations to ensure that youth voices are reflected in the final outcome.
  - g. No meetings should be scheduled during the holiday season (between December 15th, 2021 and January 15th, 2022).
2. Location of community meetings
- a. Ensure meeting locations accommodate hard-to-reach communities throughout Fresno County. For example, meetings should be held in or near unincorporated communities like Lanare, Raisin City, Cantua Creek, Biola, Easton, Del Rey, and so on to achieve geographic equity.
  - b. Collaborate with local transit agencies to provide free transportation services to rural communities to come to one of these locations.
  - c. Schedule meetings in both the mornings and evenings to provide opportunity for residents with different schedules to participate.

### 3. Meeting Format Principles

- a. Create factsheets that include information on how these funds can be used, upcoming deadlines, dates for public meetings/workshops, projected federal allocation, etc.
  - b. Participatory Process
    - i. Community members come together to identify how they would like the ARPA funding to be allocated and identify specific projects, or have staff work to identify what is needed to implement the projects.
    - ii. Have a voting model where residents can choose on which projects they would like to see financed. Fresno City's Transform Fresno process is a model the county should look to.
    - iii. Online website for the community to submit project ideas and priorities. Must also have a paper option for residents to submit project ideas.
4. Inclusivity and transparency are of the utmost importance. As such, all materials and information must be culturally sensitive, various forms of engagement should be made available, and the County must be responsive to residents' ideas. The County must demonstrate how and to what extent community comments and priorities were incorporated into ARPA allocation decisions.
  5. Provide public data showing how funds were used and how communities will benefit from the selected projects.

These recommendations are not exhaustive of the various modes, formats, and mediums to engage the public, however, have been demonstrated to be best practices approaches. We welcome the opportunity to further discuss any of our recommendations and ongoing partnership with County Staff.

Sincerely,

Mariana Alvarenga  
Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability

**From:** [Denise Espinoza](#)  
**To:** [ARPA](#)  
**Subject:** ARPA Community Survey  
**Date:** Thursday, November 4, 2021 8:59:50 AM

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CAUTION!!! - EXTERNAL EMAIL - THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK

I find it interesting that you have pay for essential workers listed as an option everywhere but don't include it as an option on the actual survey. Could you make it any more obvious you don't want to do anything for your staff???

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [John Lutes](#)  
**To:** [ARPA](#)  
**Subject:** ARPA Spending  
**Date:** Thursday, November 4, 2021 12:28:00 PM

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**CAUTION!!! - EXTERNAL EMAIL - THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK**

To Whomever it May Concern,

I noticed online that you were looking for community suggestions on how to spend the ARPA funds. On the county website, it is suggested that the county is willing to spend it on the first responders who are facing the crisis every day. Then, when you click on the survey, the options listed in the survey to select from do not, in any way, reflect the options on the website. There is no option to support first responders on the survey. Instead, you include homeless people who ironically abuse first responders every day.

I'm an EMT with American Ambulance. At the start of the pandemic, our call volume went from 200-300 calls for service in a day to 900-1050 calls in a day. And we're being paid more than minimum wage for it (after 5 years, my hourly rate as a Field Training Officer is \$15.89). It's an absolute disgrace that the politicians of this county use a bait and switch tactic to get people to look at your survey just to manipulate them into choosing what you want them to support.

My vote, if it counts for anything, is for you to finally, finally show some kind of support for the people who risk their lives to save you and your loved ones every day. Provide an increased pay or some kind of bonus to first responders with the ARPA funds.

Sincerely,

John Lutes  
EMT and resident of Supervisor District 1

**From:** [Tnavonni](#)  
**To:** [ARPA](#)  
**Subject:** Proposal submission  
**Date:** Thursday, November 4, 2021 9:55:51 AM  
**Attachments:** [Air Skin prop to Fresno.docx](#)

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**CAUTION!!! - EXTERNAL EMAIL - THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK**

Dear Fresno County,

My proposal may be a good way for using a small portion of the funds coming to Fresno County. Please see attached.

Thank you,  
Sarkis Khanzadian

I am Sarkis Khanzadian almost a native son, arriving to Fresno in 1949 at the age of 4. I am a retired Army veteran on 100% VA disability. My career has been in construction being duly licensed in three states, CA, NV, CO, for the trades Electrical, Plumbing and General Construction, individually and by exam. My past projects have spanned residential, commercial, and industrial applications, and I have extensive experience and knowledge of the various fields. I am also an inventor holding multiple patents.

This proposition is a model for community prosperity. It is a model that as a whole provides ***tangible opportunity and provision = economic growth*** for all residents that may be inclined to apply. It is a model that offers tangible incentives and enables the youth of the community with options to make progressive life choices. It is a model that can transform Fresno County into becoming a world-class hub for manufacturing and innovation.

There can be no commerce without productivity first. Unfortunately our present society, in great part supports the productivity of other nations via imported goods. As a result, the jobs provided by the private sector are few and menial at best. There is not much future in over-the-counter-sales of products produced outside the U.S.

As can be understood from the recent announcements by the Cities of Lemoore and Mendota deciding to cultivate some 61 acres of cannabis between them, from seed to consumer, that a paradigm shift has occurred, from what governments considered outside the purview of their roles as administrators, to proactive participants for the production of products. Needless to say perhaps, but the incentive is revenue, unless of course elevating people's states of euphoria is the true impetus.

Now then I propose that the County pass an ordinance under the directives of the **California Public Resources Code - PRC § 25401**, to implement a program requiring all structures, old and new with HVAC ducts, to be outfitted with the Air Skin System, briefly outlined as follows:

- **Embark** on a path to educate, manufacture, distribute, install, and maintain the Air Skin™ System under the Utility Patent No.: US **10,119,634 B1** for all existing and new HVAC ducts for structures in the County of Fresno; and thereafter beyond.
- **Clean Interior Air** - Air Skin employs multi-layered thermoplastic liners that are introduced to existing and new duct systems. The system acts as a prophylactic against the build up of debris and pathogens that tend to accumulate and breed under certain environmental conditions hosting moisture. Such an installation precludes the necessity for the tedious, inefficient, and sometimes impossible task of cleaning ducts manually, and establishes a means for efficient, continuous maintenance toward clean interior air for all structures (see photo's of dirty ducts).

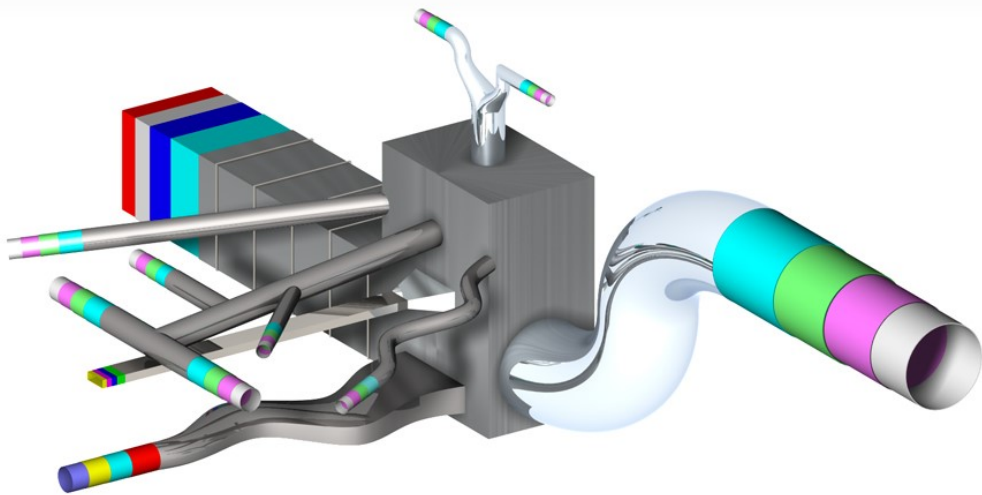
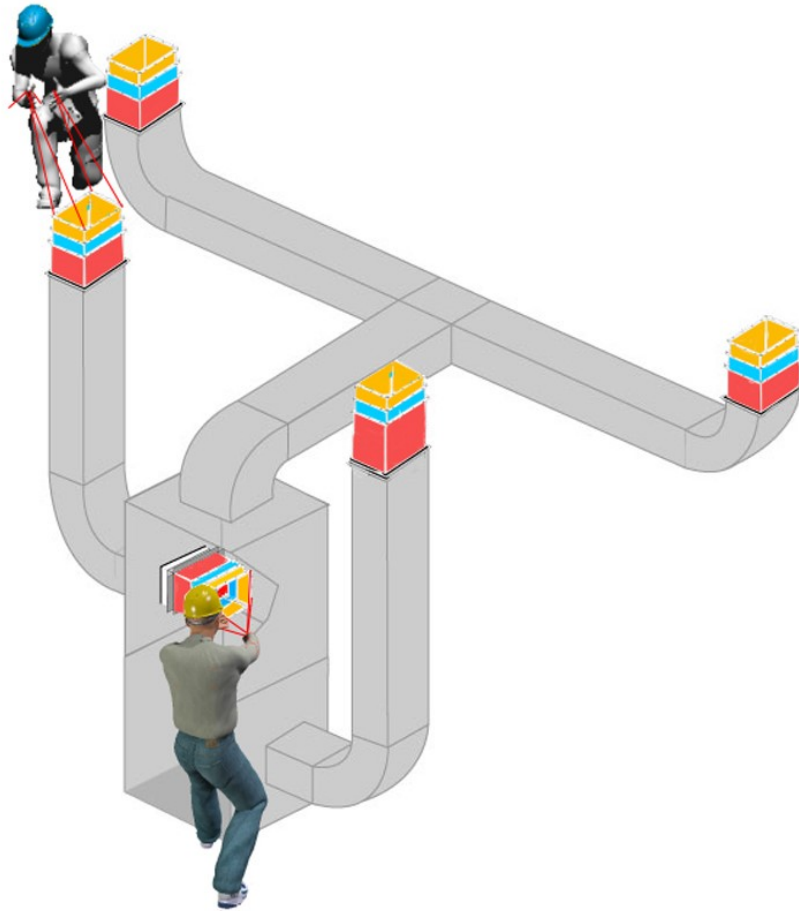


**Typical Dirty HVAC System Ventilation Duct**



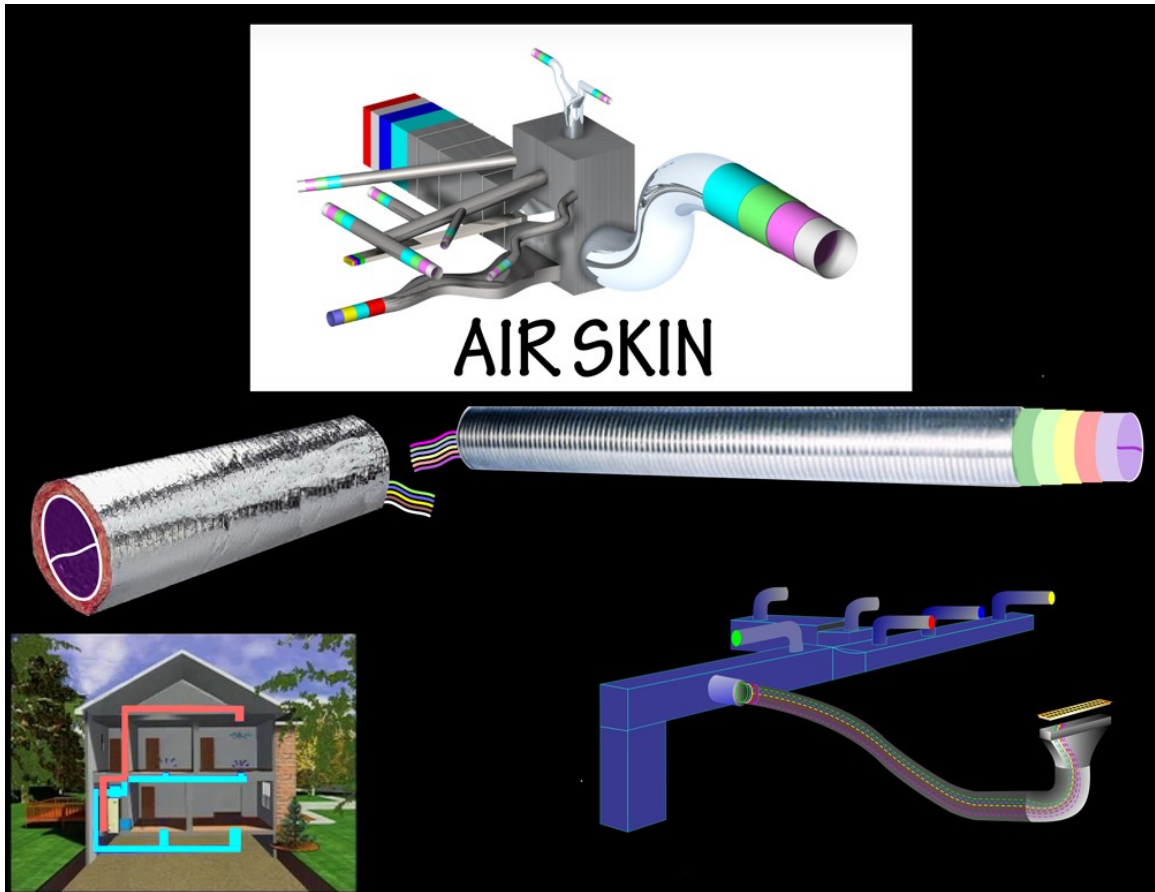


- A plurality of liners are concentrically aligned and installed (fished) in the duct works. As time passes, the innermost dirty liner is removed, leaving behind a new, clean inner layer, until such time that all liners have been exhausted, when then a new set of liners are reintroduced.



- Such a system would help to protect the health of County residents occupying

homes, apartments, schools, healthcare facilities, government offices, businesses, and the like.



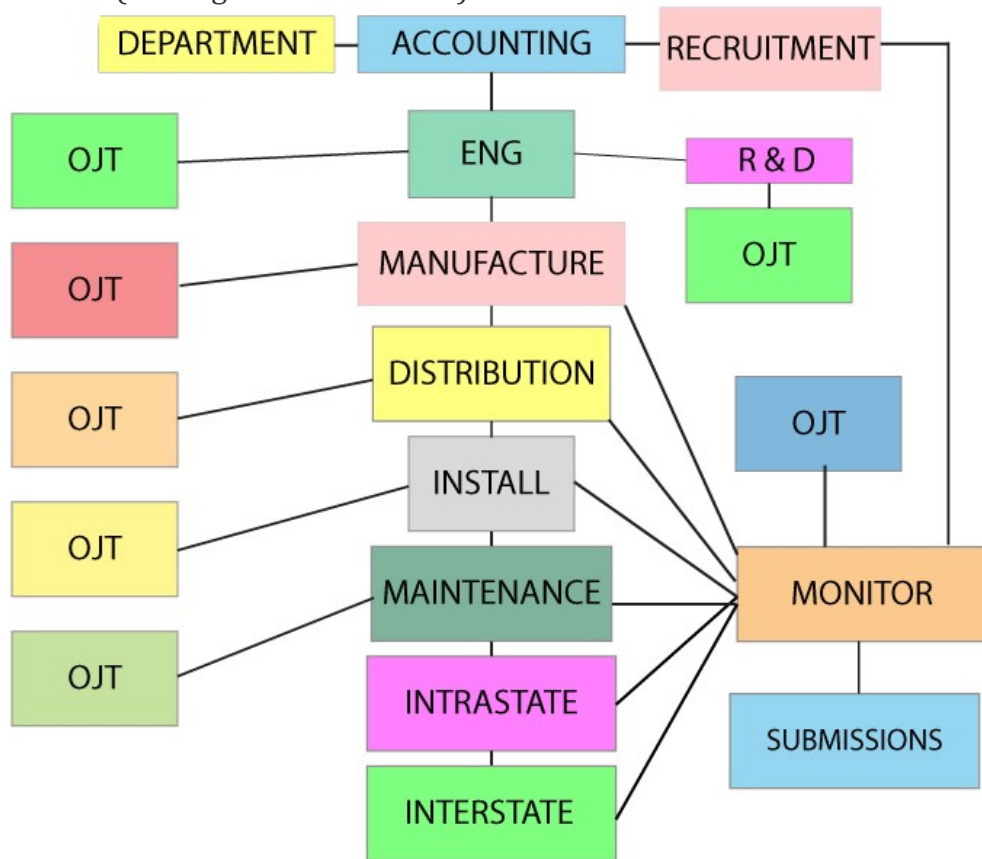
The manufacturing process is rather simple. From a folded sheet of thermoplastic material, a meld die is employed, much like a cookie cutter, forming the desired shape. The formed piece is laid in between a second folded sheet of thermo-plastic material, and a second meld die with slightly larger dimensions, forms the second layer, and so too for the third layer. Meld dies would be produced for the various duct sizes and shapes, as well as for the few fittings utilized in the trade e.g. Elbows, Wyes, Tees, and Transitions.



- **Leakage** - As important as clean interior air is for all citizens, so too is the well documented fact that duct works leak at joints by some **25% to 40%** of the conditioned air they transport, thus an efficiency loss of 25% to 40% of heating and cooling costs to consumers is recurring. Air Skin virtually eliminates 'Leakage', because it is a continuous seamless run with melded

joints, from origin (at plenum) to points of air egress (registers), no leakage along the way occurs. The Air Skin System advances the directives identified in the **California Public Resources Code - PRC § 25401**; it is under this directive that an ordinance can be made and implemented.

- Leakage not only costs the user more for less, It taxes the HVAC equipment by continued over-working, reducing the lifespan of the equipment, and it robs from the operating costs of the equipment by not delivering and maintaining the desired temperatures, thus a compounded efficiency loss that contributes to a larger carbon footprint is had.
- In place would be a County where all its structures would be upgraded toward higher energy efficiencies, lower public costs for energy use, because if 99%, ±1% of the conditioned air reaches its destination, less cost and energy will be expended.
- I suggest. The County would collect pro rata charges according to installation costs, and on going maintenance services, establish paid entry level on the job training for students, and adults, a manufacturing facility, community distribution, recurring structural maintenance regimes, and outreach to other communities, becoming the model, supplier and partner to said communities. (See organizational chart)



- Costs for establishing such a manufacturing concern are minimal compared to the potential revenues to be generated, and are further greatly offset by the benefit to the community. Thermoplastic materials are very inexpensive

(pennies per foot), and the initial tooling costs are minimal using off the shelf technologies, requiring minimal R&D. I estimate that an initial cost of \$5 - \$10 million would establish the system. (A rapid recoup is anticipated from partnerships with other municipalities).

- I have not produced a cost benefit analysis because there are others more qualified, and staffed than I, to perform such a real time study, however it is strongly self-evident because of the low material costs, and size of demographics, that this program would generate thousands of jobs, and continued revenues, as well as moving expediently toward a greener reality.
- The County may further consider soliciting new product ideas from the residents of the County; the best ideas come from the field, Air Skin is but one example. Those ideas with merit can be implemented accordingly to market relevance; this would serve to provide yet another tangible prospect for the public to engage toward a prosperous future.

For purposes intended, a program such as Air Skin far exceeds the efficacy of the adopted state wide Recycle Programs, in accordance with California Public Resources Code - PRC § 40052. The cost to municipalities and the public, and the burden has been, and is enormous. It has been shown that the practice is a negative net gain for the purposes intended.

If such a loser can be mandated with supplying everyone with recycle bins, trucks for collection spewing emissions, and warehousing, then shouldn't a winner as well be mandated to upgrade the HVAC ducts in the County to stop leakage, and maintain clean air ducts, continually? 25 to 40% efficiency loss in energy paid for, Countywide, is a big \$ number. How about statewide?

As an aside, Merchants should bear the cost for recycling their own shipping containers back to them, not the public. That alone would divert substantial streams in volume from the landfills. The shipping container is not the product, and should not be paid for by the public. It can be reused many times in most instances, and thus depreciate merchant costs.

The way to provide more jobs, and therefore elevate the standard of living for our residents is to produce products that require manufacture, by the local workforce. The private sector has proven to out-source the manufacture of products, to the detriment of our workforce. The private sector keeps the lion's share from this commerce; then pay no taxes; the County can position itself to become the lion.

In place would be an educational system geared toward providing a portal for residents to gain paid training and employment in various fields of products production e.g. industrial design, engineering, manufacture, trade installations, maintenance public relations. In place would be a model for the County to generate on going revenues, raising its budget ceiling for other important uses.

I have presented a model for this County to advance on many fronts; it can be taken in whole, or in part. The expandable, and recurring revenues, education, jobs created, energy efficiencies, health benefits, and perhaps most notable, a progressive energy uplifting the present and future residents of all communities, with ***tangible opportunity and provision = economic growth.***

I am open to any constructive proposition related to this submission. I would license my patented technology to the County and act as a consultant in these regards. Let's show the Cities of this State and others, that the 'No' in Fresno stands for 'We are Fresno and we're in the Know'.

Respectfully, Sarkis Khanzadian

**From:** [Daniel Vartan](#)  
**To:** [ARPA](#)  
**Subject:** Fund ideas  
**Date:** Thursday, November 4, 2021 8:03:12 AM

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CAUTION!!! - EXTERNAL EMAIL - THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK

The best thing for Fresno I think might be to go big on vocational education. We know there's skilled worker shortages in trucking, construction, solar etc. If we spent day \$100 million just for that and include incentives for people to learn, (for example English language learning ) I think it could have a big long term effect. Also some other ideas :

1. Fund an initiative to end meth addiction and dealing(this is public health) already existing organizations work on this, but problem has gotten worse. Can maybe use for new treatment methods.
2. More groundwater recharge/rain capture(infrastructure)
3. Tree planting and blight removal(infrastructure)
4. Exercise programs/healthy cooking classes at public parks - (public health)
5. Dedicated bike paths - tree lined separate from cars (public health and infrastructure)
- 6.electric bike subsidy- give a grant to a company that manufactures e bikes to open a factory in Fresno - we are a great town for e- bikes and this is a big growth industry(economic recovery)

Thanks for seeking community input !

Sent from my iPhone



**From:** [Denise Holston-nestle](#)  
**To:** [ARPA](#)  
**Subject:** Housing Issues  
**Date:** Sunday, November 7, 2021 6:04:36 AM

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CAUTION!!! - EXTERNAL EMAIL - THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK

Good Day,

There are so many issues going around in Fresno, California. The main problem is housing not enough affordable housing is available. The Housing Authorities are not available to assist an individual in need who needs assistance with issue. You are giving the run around and your phone calls aren't being returned, it's as you're on your own out here. It's a very serious and scary situation especially for the seniors and disabled. There's organizations that say and state that they will help you and when you contact them it's a whole different conversation. What are individuals to do to get help with out being put into a category of unfortunate.

The waiting list are so long and everyday is a challenge just trying to survive. The organizations claim they want to help well where is it because there's no reason to be scrutinized when you need help. How are you suppose to get help with your situation when it's not available to you. Re evaluate what is the best possible way to get help when you really need it rather than a number waiting to be called.

Sincerely,

Dee

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Robbie Garrett](#)  
**To:** [ARPA](#)  
**Subject:** Rescue funds  
**Date:** Sunday, December 5, 2021 8:52:11 AM

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**CAUTION!!! - EXTERNAL EMAIL - THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK**

Please take those funds and add a gate behind my business on 1304 W. Shields .The city will not do anything regarding the homeless, the drugs & trash that they bring ..I'm beyond frustrated..Please help

**From:** [Ramiro Gonzalez](#)  
**To:** [ARPA](#)  
**Subject:** Rescue Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 22, 2021 4:26:47 PM

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**CAUTION!!! - EXTERNAL EMAIL - THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK**

Spend the money on frenos forgotten communities like South East Fresno. Re-pave roads, new Markings, have shopping centers renovate their plazas. Get rid of the homeless making a mess of our streets . Money s mot needed for this. Just effort from representative that represents us

. --

Thank You

Ramiro Gonzalez



California Pan-Ethnic  
HEALTH NETWORK



CENTRAL CALIFORNIA  
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE NETWORK



County of Fresno Administrative Office  
2281 Tulare St Room, 304  
Fresno, CA 93721

[Sent Via Email to [ARPA@fresnocountyca.gov](mailto:ARPA@fresnocountyca.gov)]

CC: Fresno County Department of Public Health  
CC: Fresno County Department of Behavioral Health  
CC: Fresno County Department of Social Services  
CC: Fresno County Board of Supervisors

January 11, 2022

Dear County of Fresno,

**RE: Fresno County American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) Spending Plan**

The California Pan-Ethnic Health Network (CPEHN), the Central Valley Urban Institute (CVUI) and the undersigned organizations are writing to provide input on how Fresno County will be spending the \$194 million of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) that the County will receive by May 2022. Our organizations are committed to advancing health and racial equity for Black, Indigenous, and other person of color (BIPOC) communities, who have suffered disproportionate health and social inequities from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. In November, 2021, CPEHN and CVUI co-hosted three listening sessions with communities in Fresno County to understand major health concerns within the region and what resources and policies community members would like the County to invest funds in. While Fresno County received its first tranche of ARPA SLFR funds in May 2021, our communities have not been able to access any information on how or where these critical funds

are being spent.<sup>1</sup> The absence of impacted communities at the policy and decision-making tables is worrisome as it further exacerbates the inequities these funds are meant to address.

In California, the COVID-19 pandemic has devastated the health and wellbeing of communities with low income, but in particular, Black, Latino/a/x, Pacific Islanders, and Indigenous communities have experienced the highest COVID-19 related deaths<sup>2</sup> and continue to bear disproportionately high socioeconomic impacts. Despite racial disparity data statewide, Fresno County has not made COVID-19 death and case rates by race and ethnicity available to the public.<sup>3</sup> Our organizations recognize that equitable recovery is one that prioritizes racially just, community-led solutions to reverse the impacts of structural racism and inequities which have perpetuated disparities in COVID-19 case and death rates. Meanwhile, the US Department of the Treasury has published clear guidance since July 2021 instructing how local governments should be investing their ARPA SLFRF. As stated in the Interim Final Rule, the SLFRF Program should “lay the foundation for a strong, equitable economic recovery, not only by providing immediate economic stabilization for households and businesses, but also by addressing *the systemic public health and economic challenges that may have contributed to more severe impacts of the pandemic among low-income communities and people of color.*”<sup>4</sup> The Interim Final Rule further recognizes the importance of targeting relief efforts in line with Executive Order 13985<sup>5</sup>-- “Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government”-- by “[promoting] and [streamlining] the provision of assistance to individuals and communities in greatest need, particularly communities that have been historically disadvantaged and have experienced disproportionate impacts of the COVID–19 crisis.” Given racial disparities under the COVID-19 pandemic as well as guidance from the federal government, we urge Fresno County to center racial equity in all of its decision making around spending these once-in-a-lifetime relief dollars under the ARPA SLFRF program.

**First, we recommend that the County ensure public input, transparency and accountability in all of its decision making processes regarding ARPA SLFRF spending, by directly engaging with stakeholders in these processes.** In the Interim Final Report, the Treasury has urged local governments to “engage their constituents and communities in developing plans to use these payments, given the scale of funding and its potential to catalyze broader economic

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<sup>1</sup> *Recovery Plan Performance Report | County of Fresno.*

<https://www.co.fresno.ca.us/departments/county-administrative-office/american-rescue-plan/recovery-plan-performance-report>. Accessed 30 Nov. 2021.

<sup>2</sup> California, State of. *California’s Commitment to Health Equity.* <https://covid19.ca.gov/equity/>. Accessed 30 Nov. 2021.

<sup>3</sup> *COVID-19 Data | County of Fresno.* <https://www.co.fresno.ca.us/departments/public-health/covid-19/covid-19-data>. Accessed 8 Dec. 2021.

<sup>4</sup> “Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds.” *Federal Register*, 17 May 2021, <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/05/17/2021-10283/coronavirus-state-and-local-fiscal-recovery-funds>. Emphasis added.

<sup>5</sup> “Executive Order on Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities through the Federal Government.” *The White House*, 21 Jan. 2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/20/executive-order-advancing-racial-equity-and-support-for-underserved-communities-through-the-federal-government/>.

recovery and rebuilding.”<sup>6</sup> The Treasury’s Compliance and Reporting guidance published on June 24, 2021 states that program recipients are required to submit their first annual Recovery Plan Performance Reports to the Treasury Department no later than August 31, 2021, in which they should summarize recipients’ fund expenditures and detail how they are “promoting equitable outcomes” and leveraging “community engagement” in their decision making.<sup>7</sup> In reviewing Fresno County’s Recovery Plan Performance report, we noticed a general lack of community engagement and equity measures in its decision making, in addition to the lack of financial information.

Transparent, authentic and meaningful community stakeholder processes are key to ensuring these funds will indeed have the transformative impact the federal administration intends, to rebuild our communities and our public health systems, and more importantly, to mend and rebuild the trust and relationships between governments and directly impacted communities from the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, we urge the County to:

- **Publish all relevant financial information on a timely basis via its ARPA website**, including all incoming quarterly spending reports and annual Recovery Plan Performance Reports whenever they are required by the Department of the Treasury;
- **Share the results of the Community Survey with the public.** We appreciated that the County created a community survey with the general public and are eager to see the results of these surveys and how they inform the next phases of ARPA SLFRF spending;
- **Continue to host community education and listening sessions.** We appreciated that the County hosted two webinars to announce funding opportunities in December. We urge the County to continue to provide forums for public education and input solicitation around ARPA SLFRF program, especially from directly impacted communities during the pandemic; we also recommend that the County provide training and other technical assistance for smaller organizations who lack capacity to apply for ARPA funding; and
- **Directly engage with community based organizations** especially those who have knowledge of and relationships with BIPOC communities in Fresno County in its ARPA SLFRF decision making processes, including many undersigned organizations who hope to work with the County to collectively serve the County’s impacted residents.

**Second, our organizations recommend the County target its \$194 million of ARPA SLFRF in the following categories, as reflected in our recent community listening sessions.** The Department of the Treasury’s guidance encourages that SLFRF recipients emphasize “[providing] assistance to those households, businesses, and non-profits in communities most disproportionately impacted by the pandemic” and “[considering] funding uses that foster a strong, inclusive, and equitable recovery, especially uses with long-term benefits for health and economic

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<sup>6</sup> “Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds.” *Federal Register*, 17 May 2021, <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/05/17/2021-10283/coronavirus-state-and-local-fiscal-recovery-funds>

<sup>7</sup> “Recipient Compliance and Reporting Responsibilities.” *U.S. Department of the Treasury*, <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/assistance-for-state-local-and-tribal-governments/state-and-local-fiscal-recovery-funds/recipient-compliance-and-reporting-responsibilities>. Accessed 7 Oct. 2021.

outcomes.”<sup>8</sup> Given the stark racial inequities exposed during the pandemic and the lessons learned from 2020’s national racial reckoning, Fresno County should leverage these critical dollars as a “down payment” on racial equity, and start to rebuild the County’s public health system to serve all residents in Fresno. We also recommend that the County prioritize improving its health and human services infrastructure that is critical to COVID-19 relief and recovery, rather than directing more funding to law enforcement. Our communities are disappointed to see Fresno City’s recent ARPA proposal, where 6.8 million City ARPA funding was allocated for the police department.<sup>9</sup>

We recommend the following categories of investments for Fresno County, with direct testimonies from our community listening sessions:

**Affordable housing and homelessness:** Significant amounts of Fresno County’s ARPA should go towards increasing new affordable housing units, providing rental assistance and housing vouchers for residents, addressing racialized housing segregation and homelessness. These issues have been raised as top concerns during our listening sessions. Two testimonies from Fresno residents:

- *“It’s a tale of two cities. The city is completely split...Fresno was recently named in 2020 the number one in rent increases across the whole United States. So many people in Fresno and in the Central Valley are spending an exorbitant amount of money on their housing costs, way more than 30% of their income, so that they unfortunately need to forego other expenses. So that may be healthy foods, that may be going to the doctor or going to the dentist. What ends up happening is that they just pay high fees for slum housing, because that’s what’s available.”*
- *“I’ve been working alongside a student who’s living in their car, going to Fresno State, does not have enough resources to find a stable home, and another leader who found a home that they can afford, and it’s riddled with mold, and they’ve been sick for the entire year. ”*

**Parks and Green Space, Public Transit, Broadband, and Other Infrastructure Improvements:** We recommend the County invest in improving the availability of and accessibility to parks and other green spaces and strengthening public transportation systems throughout the County. Maintaining parks and green spaces have proven to effectively reduce crime rates in many jurisdictions around the United States, and have an overall positive impact on environmental health and mental health for residents, including improving air quality. We also urge the County to invest its ARPA funding to provide broadband for all residents: the lack of

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<sup>8</sup> “Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds.” *Federal Register*, 17 May 2021, <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/05/17/2021-10283/coronavirus-state-and-local-fiscal-recovery-funds>.

<sup>9</sup> *Finance | City Budget*. <https://www.fresno.gov/finance/budget/>. Accessed 8 Dec. 2021. See specific attachment here: <https://fresno.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=10286527&GUID=47FA5730-72E9-4EF6-8737-B439630685A0>

access to the Internet has caused significant barriers to low-income, BIPOC and immigrant families in accessing critical COVID-19 information and services, exacerbating inequities.

- *“I grew up playing soccer in Fresno’s big soccer complex when I was growing up and it was literally located next to a landfill...we didn’t really have parks in terms of being close to neighborhoods. You combine that with irresponsible development. There’s not really full access to public transportation in every part of the city as well. People in the northern and even west part of the city really rely on their cars, which creates more pollution. This, with lack of green space and the already poor air quality, it’s just a hotbed for chronic illness.”*

**Mental and behavioral health services, including community-based crisis response:**

Fresno County should continue to invest in culturally and linguistically appropriate, community-based mental health and substance use disorder services, including mental health services that address COVID-19 related trauma and racial trauma. The county should also invest in alternative care models to respond to crises that are not based on police response, for example, learning from pilot programs such as the Mental Health First programs in Sacramento and Oakland<sup>10</sup>, California.

- *“There are definitely folks who are experiencing housing insecurity in some sort of way, it’s most likely intersecting with another crisis, whether that’s food or health access. And so definitely accessibility to mental health support is what I hear a lot about. I have a few resources that I share with folks in Fresno but it’s still really challenging.”*
- *“Resources are lacking and many people don’t even know that resources are even available and where to find them and how to access them. I have stories of folks that I know who have had to call in 5150s, but they don’t really understand how to, what to do and how to help their loved ones. From a public health education standpoint, even just that education of the community on a continual basis to understand what this is, how we can access help and advocate for more and better help in the future.”*

**Direct funding to community based organizations:** Fresno should invest in community based organizations, especially those who serve BIPOC communities as part of Fresno County’s public health infrastructure and safety net. A recent policy report from the California Pan-Ethnic Health Network, Change Lab Solutions, and Prevention Institute<sup>11</sup> provides numerous examples of how community-based non-profit organizations (CBOs), including community health clinics, across California have stepped up and filled in the gaps of governmental public health responses during the pandemic. Local community organizations have been providing person-centered, trauma informed, and culturally and linguistically responsive outreach, education and services for the most underserved communities, including supporting local COVID-19 testing, vaccination, food

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<sup>10</sup> “MH First Oakland.” *APTP*, <https://www.antipoliceterrorproject.org/mh-first-oakland>. Accessed 8 Dec. 2021.

<sup>11</sup> “How California’s Community-Based Organizations Filled the Gaps for Underserved Communities.” *California Pan-Ethnic Health Network*, <https://cpehn.org/publications/how-californias-community-based-organizations-filled-the-gaps-for-underserved-communities/>. Accessed 7 Oct. 2021.



and housing assistance and other financial aid efforts. The County should further invest in supporting community-based organizations in ongoing recovery efforts.

**Direct financial assistance and better employment opportunities:** We urge the County to leverage ARPA SLFRF to provide direct financial assistance to low-income and hardest hit individuals and families, and improve education, training and long-term employment opportunities to address economic security for the most marginalized communities in Fresno.

We would appreciate a meeting with the County in January 2022 to discuss our concerns. Please contact Katherine Nasol ([knasol@cpehn.org](mailto:knasol@cpehn.org)) and Weiyu Zhang ([wzhang@cpehn.org](mailto:wzhang@cpehn.org)) at the California Pan-Ethnic Health Network and Eric Payne ([eric.paynecmc@gmail.com](mailto:eric.paynecmc@gmail.com)) at the Central Valley Urban Institute for questions.

Sincerely,

California Pan-Ethnic Health Network  
Central California Environmental Justice Network  
Central Valley Immigrant Integration Collaborative  
Central Valley Urban Institute  
Centro Binacional para el Desarrollo Indígena Oaxaqueño (CBDIO)  
Helping Others Pursue Excellence  
SIREN (Services, Immigrant Rights and Education Network)  
Western Center on Law & Poverty