

City of Tarpon Springs, Florida

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February 17, 2022

To: Mayor, Vice-Mayor and Commissioners

From: Mark G. LeCouris, City Manager

Subject: Approval of Two Projects for Immediate Funding from American Rescue Plan Act Funds

Recommendation:

That the Board of Commissioners approve immediate funding for the Bayshore Septic to Sewer Project and City-wide advertising and marketing campaign from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds.

Background:

On December 7, 2021, the Board of Commissioners was presented with five projects proposed for immediate funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). The Board approved two of those projects:

1. New Roof/Chiller System for Public Safety Building \$900,000
2. Mental Health Treatment/Crisis Intervention Counseling \$ 48,000
 And Training – Public Safety

The other three projects were deferred until we obtained public input. I have taken one project off the list: Resurfacing/Restriping Court Street Parking Lot, Library Parking Lot and Cultural Center Parking Lot. The \$60,000 cost for this project will be absorbed into our General Fund Budget for this year.

I am proposing that the last two projects be approved for immediate funding from ARPA funds:

1. Water Sewer Infrastructure: Bayshore Septic to Sewer \$1,000,000
 This remains the number one staff proposed project for approval. The project has been supported by the Budget Advisory Committee and the Sustainability Committee. Residents were in the audience of the Town Hall meeting to support this project which will complete a 10-year process on Bayshore.

2. City Wide Advertising/Marketing Campaign \$ 100,000
These funds would assist businesses by bringing residents and tourist to Tarpon Springs. This was also brought up by the business community during the Town Hall meeting and was also endorsed by the Budget Advisory Committee. The timing is very important on this project so that additional advertising and marketing can begin with the off-season beginning after Easter.

**Public Services Department ARPA Project Proposal:
Septic to Sewer Conversion for the Remainder of Bayshore Drive
Preliminary Project Estimate: \$750k - \$1.5M**

Background

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (“ARPA”) provides funding in several areas such as state and local aid. Eligible use of these funds specifically includes investments in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure

The City continues to prioritize the elimination of septic tanks through the expansion of City sewer infrastructure, particularly in areas of most beneficial impact. Areas with relatively high housing density, with soils that are less suitable for septic tanks, and that are located adjacent to water bodies are priority candidate areas. A technical evaluation was completed in 2000 that evaluated such areas in the City and a priority list was established. Several of the highest priority areas have already been completed with connection to City sewer infrastructure or are currently in the construction phase.

Bayshore Drive remains as a priority area. A portion of Bayshore Drive in the vicinity of DeSoto Drive has recently been connected to sewer subsequent to the construction of a lift station in the area associated with the development of Bayshore Heights.

Project Summary

The remaining areas to the northwest and south are proposed for this project as shown in Exhibit “A”. Approximately 60 lots remain to be connected to sewer on Bayshore Drive. The City is currently initiating a detailed design of this project along with other priority areas of sewer expansion. The City through its design consultant will evaluate various alternatives to provide sanitary sewer service, through systems such as gravity sewer, a low-pressure system that utilizes individual (private) pump stations at each home, or some combination thereof. Site conditions such as land availability for any City lift station, existing utilities, and topography will dictate the most viable option.

Preliminary Cost Estimate

A preliminary cost estimate for constructing the sewer extension to the remaining portions of Bayshore Drive highlighted in Exhibit “A” is being provided for planning purposes. This estimate is prior to detailed site evaluation, selection of alternative, and design. Therefore, a preliminary cost estimate is being provided between **\$750,000 to \$1.5 million** depending on which alternative is selected. This cost will be further refined upon alternative selection, further field investigations and design initiatives.

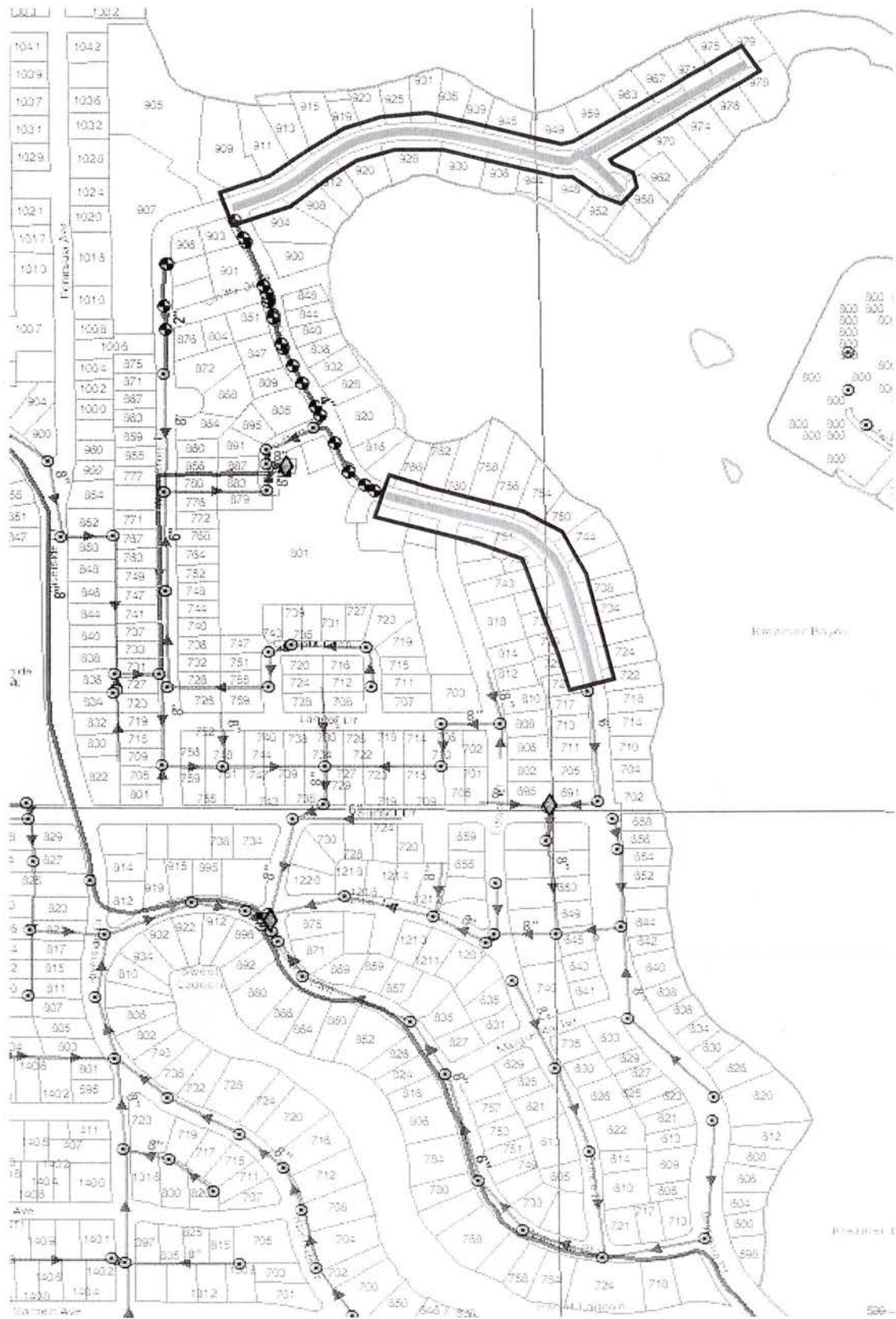


Exhibit "A" - Bayshore Drive Remaining Sewer Areas



Date: December 7, 2021
To: Mark LeCouris, City Manager
From: Karen Lemmons, Economic Development Manager

Agenda Item: **Special Consent: ARPA Funds: Citywide Advertising/Marketing**

The American Rescue Plan Coronavirus State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds presents an opportunity for the city to address negative economic impacts and make investments in infrastructure. The business community was greatly impacted through shutdowns, and the Business Recovery Program provided \$1,000 grants to 155 businesses early in the pandemic. After businesses could reopen, many people locally and within the region continued sheltering at home, and tourists were non-existent.

Analysts with the St. Pete/Clearwater CVB (VSPC) in January 2021 estimated the tourism industry's annual economic impact was down \$2 billion from the prior fiscal year. With numbers rebounding, the city has an opportunity to assist its businesses through robust advertising and marketing efforts to attract more tourists and locals to the city. More people shopping and dining and buying services will increase the overall wealth of all the city's businesses.

A suggested amount of \$100,000 could be allocated to advertising/marketing efforts. The funds could be used within one year, or spread out up to four years, as ARPA projects are required to be completed by December 2026.

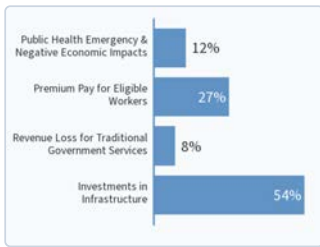
The dollars can be used for the key opportunities Tarpon Springs has each year: winter visitors – November through April and the vacationers – May through October with a sub-focus on family travel June through August.

The additional advertising/marketing dollars could include a multi-media mix of the following:

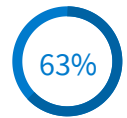
- Print – brochure distribution at Welcome Centers / hotels; VSPC's Gulf to Bay ad; the panel ad on the FL Suncoast Map; any additional targeted ads in local / regional publications
- Digital – geo-fenced digital ads; targeted ads on travel websites; create 30- and 15-sec. videos
- Continue Partner memberships – Visit FL and Visit SPC and take advantage of their analytic data
- Billboards – keep I-75 and I-4 billboards; possibly add local billboard by PIE airport; Wesley Chapel/New Tampa area; Dale Mabry; St. Pete Beach
- Jolly Trolley Advertising – at beaches
- Television ads – cable; Streaming TV ads such as YouTube TV, Hulu, etc.
- Social Media – Facebook; Instagram; YouTube; Tik Tok

These are some ideas, and staff has also reached out to VSPC for possible collaboration. If approved, a plan would be developed and brought to the BOC.

ARPA - What eligible use of the ARPA funds is most important to you?



Response options	Count	Percentage
Public Health Emergency & Negative Economic Impacts	3	12%
Premium Pay for Eligible Workers	7	27%
Revenue Loss for Traditional Government Services	2	8%
Investments in Infrastructure	14	54%



Engagement

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Responses

ARPA - On the next several questions, you will be asked to provide your FIRST and SECOND choice for the various funding categories.



Response options	Count	Percentage
Okay	0	0%

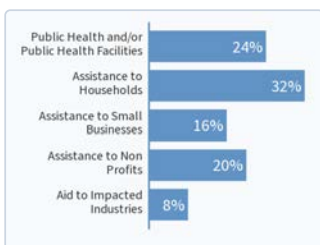


Engagement

0

Responses

ARPA - If the funds are used for PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY and NEGATIVE ECONOMIC IMPACTS, which area is your FIRST choice to spend them on?



Response options	Count	Percentage
Public Health and/or Public Health Facilities	6	24%
Assistance to Households	8	32%
Assistance to Small Businesses	4	16%
Assistance to Non Profits	5	20%
Aid to Impacted Industries	2	8%

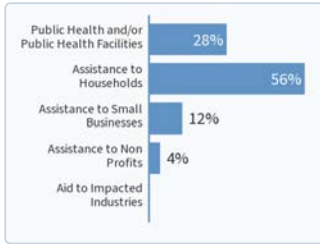


Engagement

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Responses

ARPA - Which area would be your **SECOND** choice to spend funds on if used for **PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY** and **NEGATIVE ECONOMIC IMPACT**?



Response options	Count	Percentage
Public Health and/or Public Health Facilities	7	28%
Assistance to Households	14	56%
Assistance to Small Businesses	3	12%
Assistance to Non Profits	1	4%
Aid to Impacted Industries	0	0%

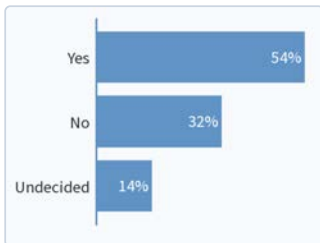


Engagement

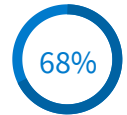
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Responses

ARPA - At this time, the City is not considering using the funds for **PREMIUM PAY FOR ELEGIBLE WORKERS**. Do you agree with this?



Response options	Count	Percentage
Yes	15	54%
No	9	32%
Undecided	4	14%



Engagement

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Responses

ARPA - If the funds are to be used on **REVENUE LOSS FOR TRADITIONAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES**, which area would be your **FIRST** choice to spend them on?



Response options	Count	Percentage
Public Safety	2	7%
Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services	2	7%
Roads/Streets/Sidewalks	10	37%
City Buildings	1	4%
Citizen Services	4	15%
Environment/Sustainability Issues	8	30%



Engagement

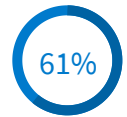
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Responses

ARPA - Which area would be your **SECOND** choice to spend the funds on if used for **REVENUE LOSS FOR TRADITIONAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES?**



Response options	Count	Percentage
Public Safety	3	12%
Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services	4	16%
Roads/Streets/Sidewalks	4	16%
City Buildings	0	0%
Citizen Services	4	16%
Environment/Sustainability Issues	10	40%

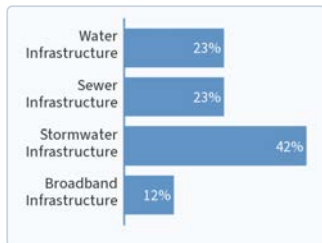


Engagement

25

Responses

ARPA - If the funds were to be used on **INVESTMENTS IN INFRASTRUCTURE**, which area would be your **FIRST** choice to spend them on?



Response options	Count	Percentage
Water Infrastructure	6	23%
Sewer Infrastructure	6	23%
Stormwater Infrastructure	11	42%
Broadband Infrastructure	3	12%

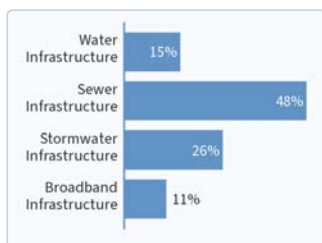


Engagement

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Responses

ARPA - Which area would be your **SECOND** choice if the funds were to be used for **INVESTMENTS IN INFRASTRUCTURE?**



Response options	Count	Percentage
Water Infrastructure	4	15%
Sewer Infrastructure	13	48%
Stormwater Infrastructure	7	26%
Broadband Infrastructure	3	11%

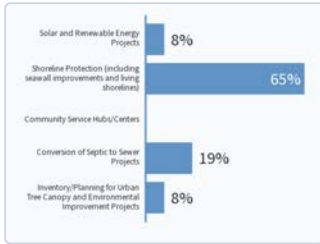


Engagement

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Responses

ARPA - For the specific area of SUSTAINABILITY, which area would be your FIRST choice to spend the funds on?



Response options	Count	Percentage
Solar and Renewable Energy Projects	2	8%
Shoreline Protection (including seawall improvements and living shorelines)	17	65%
Community Service Hubs/Centers	0	0%
Conversion of Septic to Sewer Projects	5	19%
Inventory/Planning for Urban Tree Canopy and Environmental Improvement Projects	2	8%

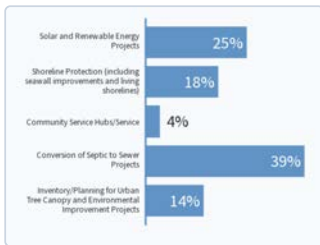


Engagement

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Responses

ARPA - For the specific area of SUSTAINABILITY, which are would be your SECOND choice to spend the funds on?



Response options	Count	Percentage
Solar and Renewable Energy Projects	7	25%
Shoreline Protection (including seawall improvements and living shorelines)	5	18%
Community Service Hubs/Service	1	4%
Conversion of Septic to Sewer Projects	11	39%
Inventory/Planning for Urban Tree Canopy and Environmental Improvement Projects	4	14%



Engagement

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Responses

Public Comments on ARPA Funding
Town Hall – February 15, 2022

- J. Riech: Use marquee signs to announce Connect Tarpon Springs engagement platform, reach out to lower income residents (focus on apartments) who are not being heard. Expand building for Cops N Kids.
- A. Protos: Asked for explanation/clarification on Broadband Infrastructure
- C. Rodriguez: \$200K advertising budget (placement in airports), Upgrade Tarpon Ave electrical and lighting for events, establish an event area on vacant Tarpon Ave lot, additional parking, lighting downtown and docks
- P. Skandeleris (sp): Finish Bayshore Sewer conversion
- P. Mangos: Sewer conversions, benefits on water quality in the river.
- C. Lundt: better visibility on the City's webpage for Connect Tarpon Springs platform
- S. Wendt: advertising Kiosk, event cards, walking map, sewer line upgrades for restaurants on Tarpon Ave/downtown (backing up during events)
- M. Eisner: infrastructure important but people most affected by Covid aren't here. Direct assistance to households important (roofs, electric), some type of application/grant process
- J. Turner: focus on holistic projects that address multiple needs, support to Not-For-Profits, healthcare, hospital request for funding
- R. Saenger: human infrastructure, mental health, broad holistic approach that supports many needs
- Dr. Robinson: couple seawalls with living shorelines (biological approach) to reduce wave action, absorb CO2

Project Report

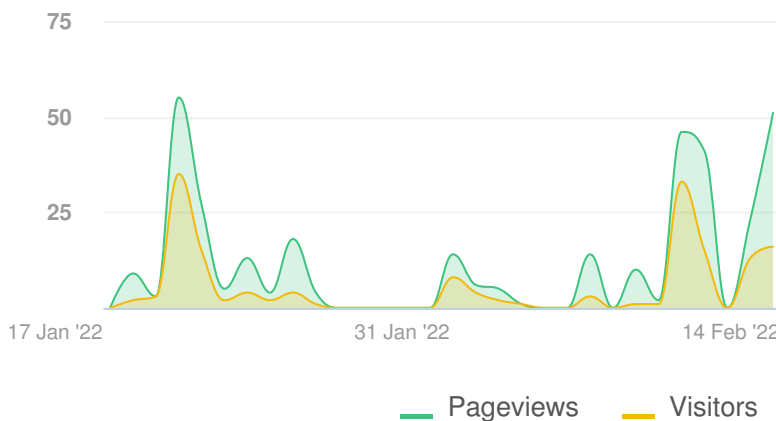
17 January 2022 - 15 February 2022

Connect Tarpon Springs

American Rescue Plan - Coronavirus State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (CSLFRF)



Visitors Summary

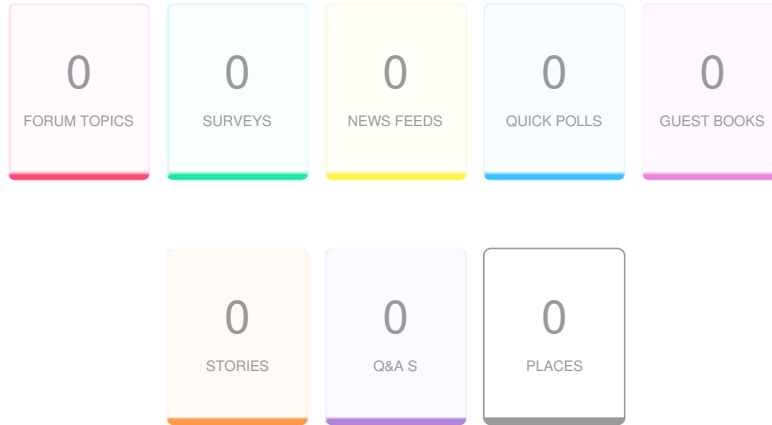


Highlights

TOTAL VISITS	217	MAX VISITORS PER DAY	35
NEW REGISTRATIONS	1	ENGAGED VISITORS	20
		INFORMED VISITORS	61
		AWARE VISITORS	155

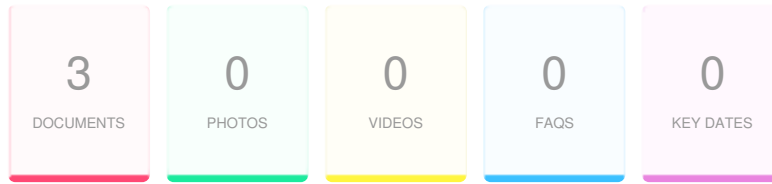
Aware Participants		Engaged Participants			
155		20			
Aware Actions Performed	Participants	Engaged Actions Performed			
Visited a Project or Tool Page	155	Registered	Unverified	Anonymous	
Informed Participants		Contributed on Forums	0	0	0
61		Participated in Surveys	0	0	0
Informed Actions Performed	Participants	Contributed to Newsfeeds	0	0	0
Viewed a video	0	Participated in Quick Polls	0	0	0
Viewed a photo	0	Posted on Guestbooks	0	0	0
Downloaded a document	16	Contributed to Stories	0	0	0
Visited the Key Dates page	7	Asked Questions	0	0	0
Visited an FAQ list Page	0	Placed Pins on Places	0	0	0
Visited Instagram Page	0	Contributed to Ideas	15	1	4
Visited Multiple Project Pages	47				
Contributed to a tool (engaged)	20				

ENGAGEMENT TOOLS SUMMARY



Tool Type	Engagement Tool Name	Tool Status	Visitors	Contributors		
				Registered	Unverified	Anonymous
Ideas	Tell us what you think!	Published	59	15	1	4

INFORMATION WIDGET SUMMARY



Widget Type	Engagement Tool Name	Visitors	Views/Downloads
Document	Stormwater-American Rescue Plan Proposed Projects List - Original	13	13
Document	CSLFRP Quick Reference Guide	6	6
Document	Stormwater - American Rescue Act Proposed Projects List - Updated F...	0	0
Key Dates	Key Date	7	8

IDEAS

Tell us what you think!

Visitors 59	Contributors 20	CONTRIBUTIONS 55
21 January 22 Joanne Telker VOTES 2	Green space Why the rush to develop every square inch of Tarpon changing the look, feel, and things that make the city special. Do we really need more cookie cutter apartment complexes to survive?	
21 January 22 JACKSPIRK VOTES 1	Raise the seawall and walkway in Craig Park	
11 February 22 jrowe VOTES 1	infrastructure, Businesses Revitalization, Homelessness Absolutely our city infrastructure improvement & upgrades, Revitalization of dilapidated property & businesses, homelessness problems in downtown Tarpon & outlying city areas, National City Manager search and funding....	
12 February 22 Kimadams VOTES 2	Connect Belcher and Disston To improve traffic flow on Alt 19/Pinellas	
15 February 22 Rea VOTES 0	Flooding is a huge concern for business owners and residents. Raising our seawalls and repairing them needs to be one of our priorities.	

IDEAS

Tell us what you think!

<p>15 February 22</p> <p>Rea</p> <hr/> <p>VOTES</p> <p>0</p>	<p>Tourism is our number one industry, and some revitalization is needed, especially on the Sponge Docks</p> <p>.</p> <p>There needs to be an incentive for building owners to maintain their properties. Grants don't seem to be taken advantage of. Perhaps annual inspections and fines for those who do not comply. Business owners are burdened with leaks, sewage problems and general disrepair.</p>
<p>15 February 22</p> <p>Rea</p> <hr/> <p>VOTES</p> <p>0</p>	<p>Parking garage. There basically is no City parking on the Docks.</p> <p>There is land on Alt 19 that would be ideal for a parking garage, which would benefit the Docks and downtown. One of the top complaints I hear from locals is not wanting to pay \$5-\$10 to park on the Docks. And in season finding a free spot is close to impossible, and the rates go up.</p>
<p>15 February 22</p> <p>s'agapó</p> <hr/> <p>VOTES</p> <p>1</p>	<p>Public Safety (High Priority), Living Seawalls, Parking Garage</p> <p>there appears to be a marked uptick in crime stats</p>
<p>15 February 22</p> <p>lucyrob</p> <hr/> <p>VOTES</p> <p>0</p>	<p>Sewers Absolutely Necessary!</p> <p>Completion of sewers is long overdue especially in water-front neighborhoods.</p>
<p>15 February 22</p> <p>Paul Francis Robinson</p> <hr/> <p>VOTES</p> <p>0</p>	<p>Couple green infrastructure with seawall improvements.</p> <p>Any changes/improvements in seawalls need to be coupled with living shorelines or living seawalls. These will clean the water, reduce wave action, increase the life expectancy of the man made materials, absorb carbon dioxide and increase biodiversity.</p>
<p>15 February 22</p> <p>lucyrob</p> <hr/> <p>VOTES</p> <p>0</p>	<p>Demonstration Project to Guide Future Flood Preventing Infrastructure</p> <p>City has a chance to do a ground-breaking, world class model for future flood prevention. This should include the necessary engineering, but be governed by resilient green solutions like living shorelines. Moving beyond the old single approach of steel and concrete, the model should use products that encourage sea grass and filter feeders. Public Art should be an integral part of the model, incorporating an aesthetic component to the scientific solutions. Projects in Europe do this, blurring the lines between infrastructure, art and recreational values.</p>
<p>15 February 22</p> <p>Paul Francis Robinson</p> <hr/> <p>VOTES</p> <p>0</p>	<p>Shade trees and fountains.</p> <p>Heat waves and months of days in which the heat index reaches or exceeds 105 F., every day, will be a reality within 30 years. To maintain viability as a city and a destination, Tarpon must begin a series of shade tree, fountain and cooling station projects.</p>

IDEAS

Tell us what you think!

15 February 22 s'agapó	what is the maintenance schedule for the brick pavers on Orange St?
VOTES 1	