



**DATE:** February 9, 2022  
**TO:** Board of Commissioners  
**FROM:** Kimberly Branam, Executive Director  
**SUBJECT:** Report Number 22-08  
Update on the American Rescue Plan Phase I Investments

#### **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF INFORMATION ITEM**

No action is requested; this is an information item.

At the February 9, 2022, Prosper Portland Board of Commissioners (Board) meeting, staff will provide an update on how Prosper Portland is investing federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) funding that was allocated to the agency by the Portland City Council.

#### **STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT AND OUTCOMES**

These projects will deliver on Prosper Portland's Strategic Plan goals to create healthy, complete neighborhoods; provide access high quality employment; foster wealth creation within communities of color; and form 21st century civic networks, institutions, and partnerships.

#### **BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

The ARP, also known as the COVID-19 Stimulus Package or American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) of 2021, is a \$1.9 trillion economic stimulus bill signed into law in March 2021. The City of Portland will receive \$207.9 million of local relief funds in two installments. The first allocation was received in May 2021, with the second expected in Spring 2022.

City Council committed \$40.4 million in ARP funding in the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 budget approved in June 2021 and voted to allocate an additional \$63.6 million. On June 9, 2021, City Council through Ordinance No. 190443 and 190525 appropriated \$7,395,931 to Prosper Portland to implement five economic development projects outlined below.

On September 29, 2021, through Resolution No. 7432, the Prosper Portland Board authorized execution of an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the City of Portland (City) Office of Management and Finance (OMF) to implement economic development projects with local federal ARP Funds; and authorized the executive director to execute subrecipient contracts for the following projects:

Minority Chambers of Commerce Support. This work provides capacity building funds to Minority Chambers of Commerce and community-based partner organizations directly serving Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) small business owners. Prosper Portland has executed one-year subrecipient agreements with the Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber, Black American Chamber of Commerce, Philippine American Chamber of Commerce, Oregon Native American Chamber, and Soul District Business Association. Staff are currently working to execute a contract with Oregon Pride In Business and may offer an additional award to Asian American chamber.

Performance Measures for this project will include:

- Number of engagements at City advisory tables or City-led activates
- Expenditure reporting – how each organization spent the funds and the impacts of the investment
- Number of organization staff funded with these capacity-building resources

Venture Portland Catalytic Investment Initiative. Prosper Portland executed a subrecipient contract with Venture Portland to increase staff capacity to better serve six designated Catalytic Investment Initiative (CII) business districts that have historically been under-represented and have a higher number of BIPOC-owned businesses. The additional staff capacity will allow Venture Portland to support priority business districts and their small businesses that have been adversely impacted by COVID-19.

In addition to support for the CII districts, Venture Portland has also deployed an Events Hub Team. This team is a one-stop-shop for business districts and organizations needing technical assistance to implement neighborhood and large-scale events while navigating COVID-19 restrictions and best practices.

Performance Measures for this work will include:

- Number of organization staff funded with these resources
- Increase in volunteer hours per district
- Number of events supported by the Events Hub
- Number of training or workshop hours provided by Venture Portland

Downtown and Commercial Business Corridors Revitalization and Activation Consultant Team. Prosper Portland contracted with Vida En Color, a consultant team, to implement a near-term retail and activation strategy with a focus on prioritizing BIPOC business owners and community-based organizations serving BIPOC individuals. The consultant will lead the following activities to support and elevate small businesses and organizations adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Marketing and communications campaign to promote activities within the central city and broader city of Portland featuring small businesses and community-based organizations.
- Plan and execute pop-up small business events and activation for interim use activities in vacant storefronts and adjacent spaces.
- Program community-based events and activations at key community business nodes and corridors in partnership with community-based organizations.

Small Business Resource Navigation & Technical Assistance. In an effort to address inequitable access to relief funding and support, Prosper Portland is launching additional navigation and technical assistance services to round out the suite of business resources. A request for proposal (RFP) process was issued in December 2021 seeking community-based providers to deliver the services outlined below. Services will begin Spring 2022 after providers are selected, contracts are executed, and providers have completed their onboarding process. In addition, Prosper Portland staff are also developing a website that will launch once service providers are onboarded. This site will act as a central hub for business accessing resources and connections to navigation services, which will include chat and online scheduling options.

Scope A: Central Resource Hub Navigator: Prosper Portland will contract with one partner organization to support the central resource navigator scope. Services include answering inbound calls from a central phone line and responding to inquires via chat and email. The central resource navigator is also responsible for referring businesses to appropriate resources and assisting businesses with scheduling appointments online with the network of navigators for deeper service.

Scope B: One-on-One Business Assistance Navigation: Prosper Portland will contract with approximately five partner organizations to deliver one-on-one navigation services, which include assisting and advising businesses seeking resources while using a trauma-informed approach; supporting businesses with completing forms and compiling documents for COVID relief funding; and referring business to other technical assistance resources or support as needed. Staff are seeking cultural and language specific service providers to better serve Portland’s business community.

Scope C: Focused Relief & Recovery Technical Assistance for Black-owned businesses: Prosper Portland will contract with one partner organization to deliver culturally specific services to Black-owned businesses. Services may include, business stabilization, commercial tenanting support, business growth, direct support accessing COVID-19 relief funding or accessing capital.

Scope D: Focused Relief & Recovery Technical Assistance for Green Cities Businesses: Prosper Portland will contract with one partner organization to deliver industry specific support to Green Cities companies. Services include general technical assistance and connections to Federal, State or local climate, transportation and environmental projects and provide direct support to the companies applying for these opportunities.

Performance measures for some (but not all) of the scopes this work will include:

- Number of businesses served (disaggregated by business location, size, race, ethnicity, and gender of business owners).
- Type of service received (disaggregated by business location, size, race, ethnicity, and gender of business owners).
- Number of businesses that received service in a language other than English.
- Amount of loans and grants applied for or received.
- Qualitative data on each business to evaluate business health and value of services (disaggregated by business location, size, race, ethnicity, and gender of business owners).

Rapid Workforce Training & Employment for Vulnerable Portlanders. Prosper Portland executed a subrecipient contract with Worksystems, Inc. to provide paid work opportunities and rapid re-careering services for Portlanders who are houseless, at risk of eviction, or at risk of involvement in violence. These services will address the disproportional economic impacts COVID-19 has had on people of color and other vulnerable populations currently disconnected from the workforce.

The paid work and stipend opportunities will focus on city recovery efforts including trash and graffiti cleanup and houseless community support. Work opportunities will also include placements at businesses that are at risk of closing because of losses incurred while cooperating with the social distancing guidelines.

The rapid workforce training component will help individuals’ re-career through short-term and intensive trainings focused on high-demand industries with middle-income jobs. The trainings are approximately 12 weeks or shorter in duration from the start of training to employment. After a participant has completed a training program, they will be provided direct connections to employers. This funding will be used to scale existing industry-specific trainings. These programs have connections to employer partners who hire program graduates in areas such as construction, waste and recycling hauling, entry-level clerical positions within hospitals and clinics, entry level information technology careers, and banking customer service.

Performance measures for this work will include:

- Type of trainings provided.
- Number of participants enrolled in and completing sectoral job training programs (disaggregated by zip code, race and ethnicity, gender, income, household size, age, disability).
- Number of participants enrolled in paid work opportunities (disaggregated by zip code, race and ethnicity, gender, income, household size, age, disability).
- Number of people who completed training and connected to middle income careers (disaggregated by zip code, race and ethnicity, gender, income, household size, age, disability).
- Number of people who completed training and connected to other types of employment (disaggregated by zip code, race and ethnicity, gender, income, household size, age, disability).
- Number of program participants who obtained/retained stable housing at program completion.

**EQUITY IMPACT**

These projects have been funded by City Council because they align with the City’s core values of anti-racism, equity, and in-language access and transparency to ensure benefits for BIPOC communities and the most vulnerable Portlanders.

**COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND FEEDBACK**

In March 2021, staff convened the Economic Relief and Stabilization Coordinating Council (Economic Council) to identify, coordinate, and deliver on key economic relief and stimulus priorities aligned with City Council direction, community input, and near-term opportunities. The Economic Council coordinated across City bureaus to achieve shared priorities, reduce duplication and confusion, and provide options and recommendations to City Council.

Staff engaged with the Economic Recovery Task Force, which consisted of nearly 70 business, community, foundation, labor, public and workforce leaders, to provide guidance on project proposal development. Staff also solicit feedback from and provide project updates to the PDX Recovery and Activation and Business Success and Job Creation Action Tables.

**BUDGET AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

Prosper Portland anticipates receiving \$7,395,931 of ARP funds. The chart below provides a breakdown of funding allocation by initiative. Prosper Portland will allocate \$571,928 of these funds toward staffing and overhead costs. A limited term project manager and project coordinator have been hired to implement a portion of this work.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Allocation Amount</b>
Rapid Workforce Training & Employment for Vulnerable Portlanders	\$4,000,000
Venture Portland Catalytic Investment Initiative	\$530,931
Downtown and Commercial Business Corridors Revitalization and Activation Consultant Team	\$165,000
Small Business Resource Navigation & Technical Assistance	\$2,000,000
Minority Chamber of Commerce Support	\$700,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,395,931</b>

**RISK ASSESSMENT**

Staff have conducted a risk assessment for each partner organization. If an organization is considered moderate to high risk, additional monitoring and/or reporting may be required.

Project timelines may need to be adjusted to onboard additional staff to manage the projects.

**ATTACHMENTS**

None.