FAQ 2.18. Would investments in improving outdoor spaces (e.g., parks) be an eligible use of funds as a response to the public health emergency and/or its negative economic impacts? [6/23]

There are multiple ways that investments in improving outdoor spaces could qualify as eligible uses; several are highlighted below, though there may be other ways that a specific investment in outdoor spaces would meet eligible use criteria.

First, in recognition of the disproportionate negative economic impacts on certain communities and populations, the Interim Final Rule identifies certain types of services that are eligible uses when provided in a Qualified Census Tract (QCT), to families and individuals living in QCTs, or when these services are provided by Tribal governments. Recipients may also provide these services to other populations, households, or geographic areas disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

These programs and services include services designed to build stronger neighborhoods and communities and to address health disparities and the social determinants of health. The Interim Final Rule provides a non-exhaustive list of eligible services to respond to the needs of communities disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, and recipients may identify other uses of funds that do so, consistent with the Rule’s framework. For example, investments in parks, public plazas, and other public outdoor recreation spaces may be responsive to the needs of disproportionately impacted communities by promoting healthier living environments and outdoor recreation and socialization to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Second, recipients may provide assistance to small businesses in all communities. Assistance to small businesses could include support to enhance outdoor spaces for COVID-19 mitigation (e.g., restaurant patios) or to improve the built environment of the neighborhood (e.g., façade improvements).

Third, many governments saw significantly increased use of parks during the pandemic that resulted in damage or increased maintenance needs. The Interim Final Rule recognizes that “decrease[s to] a state or local government’s ability to effectively administer services” can constitute a negative economic impact of the pandemic.
UG Parks & Recreation Needs

Infrastructure

- Five facilities in QCT
  - Armourdale
  - Bethany
  - B. Lee
  - Kensington
  - Parkwood Upper level

-$7.8 million investment over five years (Ameresco data)
UG Parks & Recreation Needs

Infrastructure

Trail Projects
- WYCO Park @ $700K
- Pierson Park @ $700K
- Rosedale @ $300K
- $1.7-$2 million

Kensington Soccer Field
- Renovations $1 Million

Playground replacements
- 5-7 structures
- $500,000 total investment in one year

Klamm Park tennis courts
- $84K

Total investment: $3,584,000
UG Parks & Recreation Needs

Infrastructure

- Amphitheatre
  - Raise the stage roof
  - COVID & outdoor event preferences
  - $1 million

- Sunflower
  - COVID & increase on golf play
  - Improvements $450K
UG Parks & Recreation Needs

Programming
- Summer programs
- Enrichment classes
- STEM
- Before and after school programming
- $500K investment/year

* In 2012 approximately $350K summer program budget was cut and never replaced
* Laid off approximately 50 instructors
Other approaches

Local
Raytown
Saint Joseph
Ottawa Rec

Nationally
Lompoc, CA:
https://www.cityoflompoc.com/home/showpublisheddocument/31720/637546151902900000
• Only references renovations, not adding brand new amenities like a FC

Duluth, MN:
https://duluthmn.gov/media/WebSubscriptions/31/20210629-31-6401.pdf

Lafayette, LS
https://bloximages.newyork1.vip.townnews.com/theadvocate.com/content/tncms/assets/v3/editorial/9/6e/96e30c9c-ea37-11eb-82a7-835105b18880/60f83c77099b5.pdf.pdf
• “Quality of life initiatives”
• Covered bball courts - pg. 10