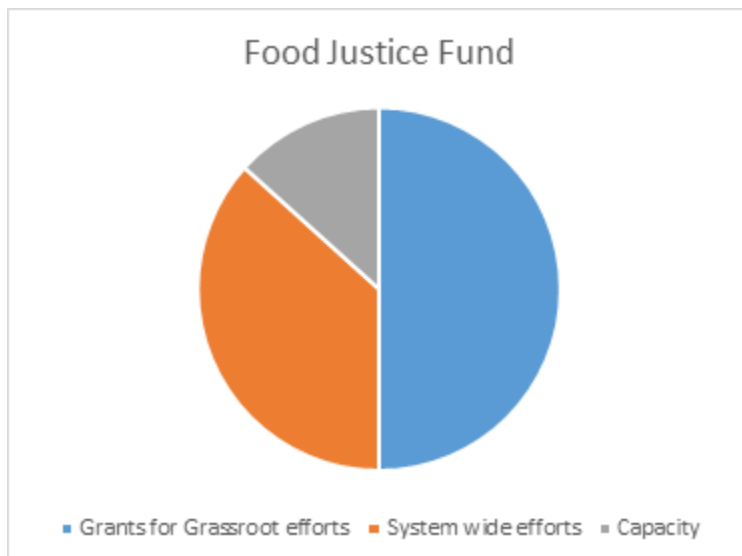




Food Justice Fund

The purpose of the Food Justice Fund is to increase public investment in a just, equitable, and sustainable food system, that supports our neighborhoods, local economy, and the environment. The purpose of this document is to outline a plan for the process that will guide how the City allocates the American Rescue Plan Act dollars that are dedicated to this fund. Food insecure areas will be identified by a number of indicators including the Healthy Food Priority Access Areas, USDA Food Access Research Atlas, and City CDBG eligible Census tracts.



Total Fund: \$3Million to be awarded by December 31, 2024 and expended by the end of 2026.

Priority 1: Grassroots and small-scale investments in Pittsburgh’s Food System

One-half of the funds will be managed by a 3rd party organization. This organization will be identified through the bid process and will manage grants to support grassroots efforts. These grants can range from \$2,000 to \$75,000. Eligible organizations are those with an annual budget of \$500,000 or less. All grantees will need to be a 501c3 organization or represented by a fiscal sponsor.

Priority 1 Funding: \$1.5Million

Priority 2: Large-scale investments in Pittsburgh's Food System

For larger scale projects, the City of Pittsburgh will maintain a direct relationship with any entity that is working with the city to complete those projects. Larger projects are defined as efforts that fall within the \$75,000 to \$500,000 funding range. The City will hire a Food Justice Coordinator who will continue to work with the community in identifying initiatives to support the City of Pittsburgh's food system. All grantees will need to be a for-profit, a 501c3 or represented by a fiscal sponsor and identified as serving a community recognized as food insecure. Eligible projects for consideration will fall into one of the following categories:

- Improving food access through urban agriculture, the expansion/creation of community markets and grocery stores, and providing direct food access relief to individuals.
- Improving food business and manufacturing through the establishment of food hubs and cooperatives that empower more individuals to create avenues for local food production.
- Increasing consumer public health through educational outreach, youth programs, cooking demonstrations and increasing access to culturally relevant foods.
- Addressing issues in food waste through composting and environmental efforts to reduce food waste.

Priority 2 Funding: \$1.1 Million

Administrative: Both efforts will require funding to address the needed capacity to manage the Fund. This includes:

- The hiring of the Food Justice Coordinator at the City of Pittsburgh, Sep 2023-2026
Total of \$233,109.00
- The 10% fee to the 3rd party organization for managing the priority 1 grant funding.
This fee will be determined following the bid process to select an organization.
Total of \$150,000.00

Administrative Funding: \$400,000.00 Approx.

Community & Government partnership

- A diverse group of individuals representing the city and community will be part of reviewing and scoring in the RFP selection process for grant allocations to be reviewed and approved by City Council.
- This group will also work with the City of Pittsburgh Food Justice Fund Coordinator to engage in the process to determine the focus of priority 2 funded projects.
- It is recommended that this group be comprised of 9 individuals representing the city and the community with a wide range of experience in Pittsburgh's food systems.
- The City will continue to involve greater community input through EngagePgh, regular outreach and continued partnership with key stakeholders like the Food Policy Council and The Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank.

Measurement & Outcome Reporting

In order to determine the impact of the Food Justice Fund, participants will be expected to provide quantitative and qualitative data through regular reporting. This reporting structure is mirrored off the Stop the Violence evaluation form and will ensure that the city can determine the overall impact and performance of the Food Justice Fund investments. Quantitative measurements will be based on the project type; whereas, all participants will answer the same general qualitative questions about the projects results. Note: Basic information about the organization and its qualifications will be captured through the RFP application process.

Reporting Requirements

- Required bi-annual reporting
 - Interim quarterly reporting ensures project goals are on target and if additional support is needed.
 - 1-year recipients provide a final report at the 12-month mark explaining achieved outcomes and goals; multi-year recipients provide a final report at the completion of their project timeline.
 - Any reporting required by ARPA guidance will be required on a quarterly basis.
- Data collected will be used to measure overall fund impact communicated in an end of project report that will be compiled and presented to council and the public for transparency.

Example project specific reporting questions (Quantitative):

Project type: Urban agriculture, community garden, and food forests

- Total square footage or acreage of new farm or garden land
- Total count of new farm animals (by type)
- Number of beds
- Crop count (to include tree guilds)
- Harvest count
- Number of unique individuals served, including food brought to others
- Food brought to a pantry and how many individuals are served by that amount

Example general project reporting questions (Qualitative):

- How did you pursue the outcomes provided in your grant application?
- Share at least one story demonstrating the impact this program had on the neighborhood or individuals living in the neighborhood.
- What was the most important lesson learned from implementing this program?
- What advice would you share if another organization or business wanted to do something similar?

Proposed Fund Roll Out Timeline

Summer 2023 – Develop work scope for bid process and open the bid for support of priority 1 funding allocations; Prepare and post City position for Food Justice Fund Coordinator.

Fall 2023- Hire City position for Food Justice Fund Coordinator; close and select bid for support of priority 1 funding allocation. Determine the make-up of the RFP selection committee/advisory board.

Fall/winter 2023 - RFP for the priority one funded projects is released. Discussions begin regarding the priority 2 project funding priorities.

Spring 2024 - Funds are awarded for priority one funded projects. Decisions made on focus of priority 2 funded projects will allow the city to begin the allocation process for priority 2 projects.