

Re: City of Chester Community Engagement

According to the Final Rule dated May 17, 2021, entities with over 250,000 residents are mandated by ARPA to create an annual Recovery Plan Performance Report to Treasury. Part of that annual Recovery Plan Performance Report is a detailed discussion of community engagement. The disclosure requirements for community engagement are as follows:

*Recipients should describe how their jurisdiction's planned or current use of funds incorporates community engagement strategies including written feedback through surveys, project proposals, and related documents; oral feedback through community meetings, engagement; as well as other forms of input, such as steering committees, taskforces, and digital campaigns that capture diverse feedback from the community. Recipients may describe completed or planned community engagement strategies specifically focused on their SLFRF program and projects or community engagement strategies that included SLFRF among other government programs. Recipients should also describe how community engagement strategies support their equity goals, including engagement with communities that have historically faced significant barriers to services, such as people of color, people with low incomes, limited English proficient populations, and other traditionally underserved groups.*

Since the City does not have over 250,000 residents, such community engagement noted above is not required according to the Final Rule.

However, the Interim Final Rule indicates the following more broadly regarding community engagement:

*These reporting requirements reflect the need for transparency and accountability, while recognizing and minimizing the burden, particularly for smaller local governments. Treasury urges State, territorial, Tribal, and 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 recovery and rebuilding.*

Even though the final rule recognizes the reporting burden on smaller local governments such as the City and reduces the extensive community engagement reporting requirements, the City has undertaken many of the community engagement strategies required of much larger localities, including the following:

- Feedback through community meetings
- Steering committees, such as the proposed ARPA steering committee
- Public budget hearings
- One on one meetings by elected officials with constituents

As a result, these strategies, though not required, represent best practices implemented by the City over community engagement noted in the Final Rule.