

Data Analyst Fellow

City of Baltimore Mayor's Office of Recovery Programs

Supervisor Jason Howard — Data Project Manager



MAYOR'S OFFICE OF
**RECOVERY
PROGRAMS**
BALTIMORE CITY

INESSA ROYT

Data Analysis

Index

1. The Backstory

1.1 About the Office

1.2 Meet the Team

1.3 My Summer (Summary)

2. Data Analysis Work

3. Other Tasks

4. Impact / Moving Forward

4.1 Office Impact

4.2 Key Takeaways

5. Get in Touch



Mayor's Office of Recovery Programs – Baltimore, MD

- [Baltimore's Mayor's Office of Recovery Programs \(MORP\)](#) was recently created to oversee and distribute the city's allocation of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding from the Federal Government.
- The City's \$641M in ARPA funding was available to City agencies and nonprofit organizations via an application process
- The MORP office ensures that all ARPA-related investments are appropriately spent, tracked, and well-communicated to the Mayor, council, citizens, and US Treasury.
- Investments thus far include: the COVID-19 public health response, workforce development, violence prevention, broadband, economic recovery, and program evaluation along others.

Mayor's Office of Recovery Programs – Meet The Team



Shamiah Kerney
Chief Recovery Officer



Elizabeth Tatum
Deputy Director



My Direct Supervisor
Jason Howard
Data Project Manager



Patrick Williams
Project Manager



Joshua H. Wilson
Project Manager



Tiangay Waines
Grant Accountant



John Djeuf
Intern



Lauren Jackson
Program Compliance
Officer



Inessa Royt
Fellow

Mayor's Office of Recovery Programs – My Summer

- 1 Daily Stand- Ups
- 2 Weekly Team Huddle
- 3 Weekly ARPA Project Status Calls
- 4 Additional Meetings as Needed
- 5 Time to Learn and Work on Projects!

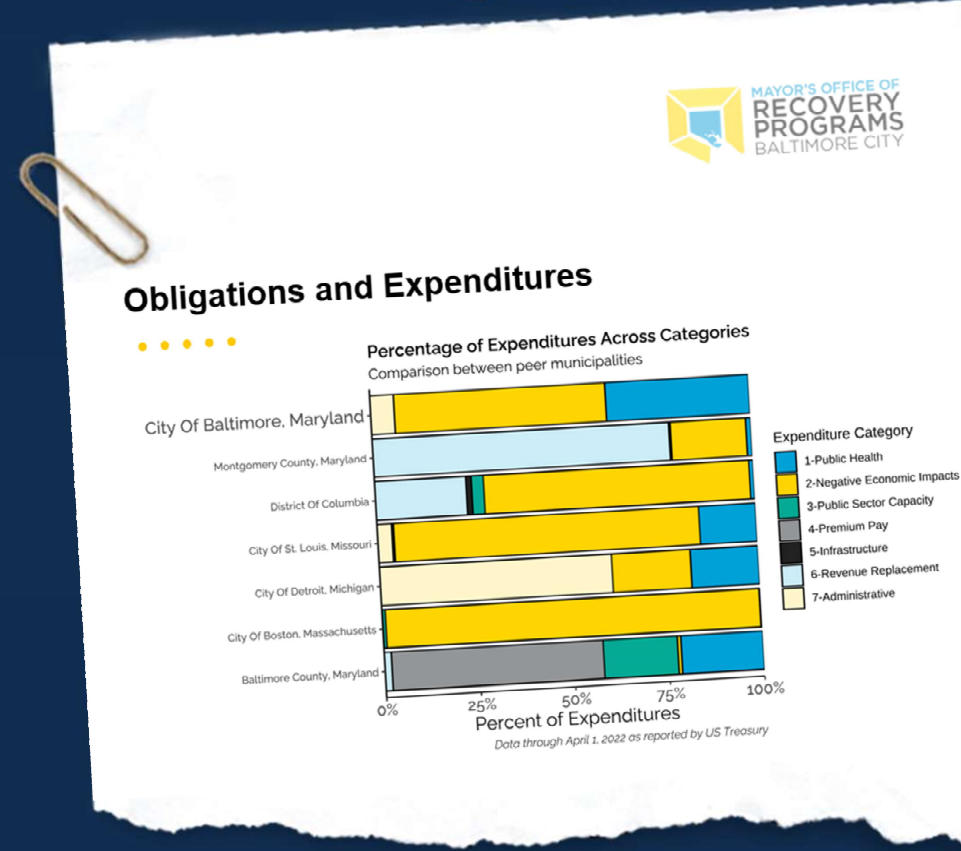
*I used tools such as **Excel, R, SharePoint, and Teams** to **analyze data** and share **actionable insights** about millions of dollars of ARPA funding allocations that were / will be used for **Mayoral memos** and **public facing materials**.*



Analyzing Data for Impactful Insights

ARPA Data:

- Comparing Baltimore city to other cities and to peer municipalities.
- I answered **pressing questions**:
 - Where is Baltimore city spending their allocations?
 - What about other cities?
 - Who got more/less funding?
 - Who spent all or most of their funding and who hasn't shown what they spend money on?



From City of Baltimore Mayor's Office of Recovery Programs Ways and Means Committee Oversight Hearing Presentation 08/09/22

My ARPA data insights were mentioned in the local news!



 THE BALTIMORE BANNER

Kerney presented an analysis of U.S. Department of Treasury data, conducted by her office, showing Baltimore ahead of a group of designated “peer” cities when it comes to allocating and spending its federal stimulus money. While Baltimore ranks in the bottom half of large cities — those exceeding 250,000 residents — in both the amount of stimulus money obligated and spent, the analysis showed Charm City outpacing certain similar municipalities. Of those cities, Boston outstripped Baltimore in its ARPA money obligated and spent as of April 1 — the latest data available — while St. Louis, Detroit, and Washington, D.C., all trailed.

Cities across the country have been “slow to spend” their federal stimulus money, and Kerney said third-party sources show “Baltimore City is not an anomaly” in this process.

Additionally, the office’s analysis showed that Baltimore has used significantly more of its ARPA money for addressing public health issues and the economic fallout of the pandemic compared to other large cities. Elsewhere, ARPA spending has included a significantly larger focus on replacing lost revenues from the pandemic, the loosest category under treasury department guidelines, the analysis showed. Baltimore has set aside \$80 million for budget needs, while Kerney said a focus on this usage to fill salaries and personnel costs in other cities has contributed to the perception that they are moving at a faster clip.

Excerpt from Baltimore Banner Article “*Baltimore ARPA official responds to criticisms that city’s pandemic stimulus is moving too slow*”

Analyzing Data for Impactful Insights

Public Opinion Data:

The Baltimore Community was asked to fill out a survey where respondents prioritized key areas.

- People were trying to take the survey multiple times.
- Some added their own categories that had similar themes.
- I did the data cleaning for the dataset.
- I used R to create **visualizations** and find key **insights** to help **drive decisions**.



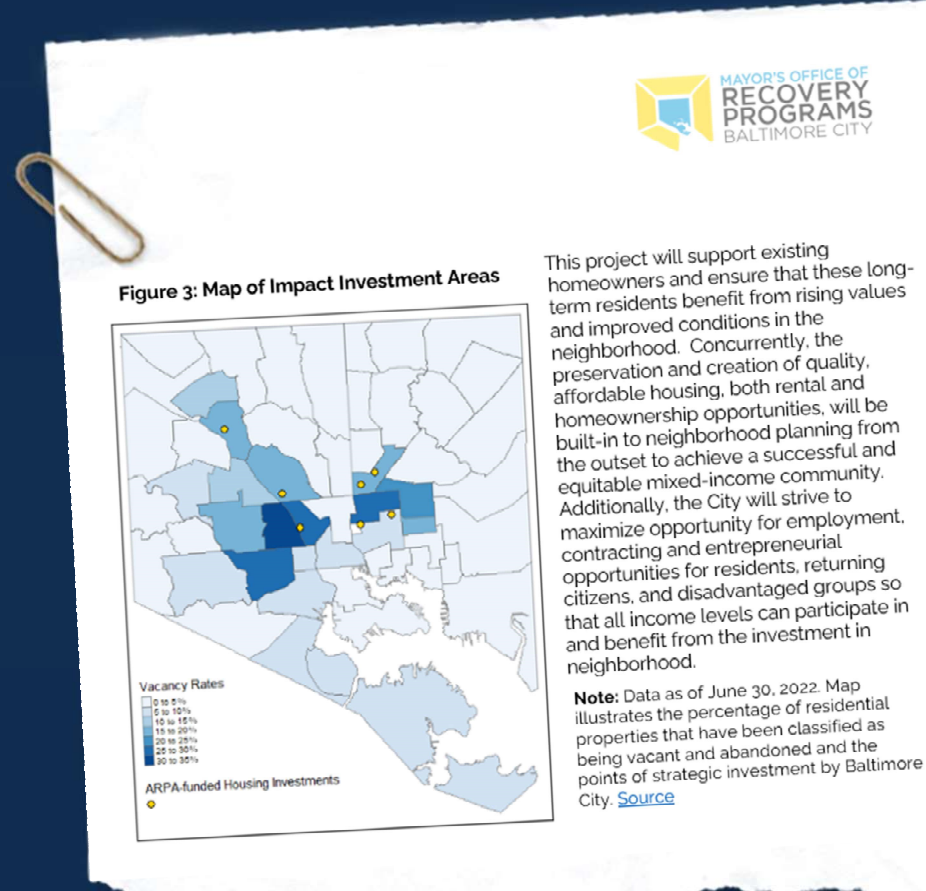
3B: Public Feedback Survey

The Recovery Office created an online feedback form made available to the public in September 2021, and continues to garner responses from the community to date. As of the reporting period, 1,173 individuals have provided 1,209 responses on how ARPA funding should be expended. The topic areas cited the most are reducing gun violence, followed by youth programming, neighborhood development, and broadband access. As decisions were made on which project proposals to fund, the Recovery Office referenced community input received through the online public feedback form. These topic areas are reflected in some of the largest funding commitments Baltimore City has made to date: \$50 million for violence intervention strategies; \$41 for recreation and parks targeted for youth; \$7 million targeted for employment for youth; \$100 million for housing initiatives; and \$35 million for broadband and digital equity. Additionally, as of the reporting period, the Recovery Office awarded \$7.3 million to nonprofits for various projects championed by community groups. The Recovery Office anticipates funding more nonprofits directly in the coming months.

From City of Baltimore Mayor's Office of Recovery Programs Annual Report to Treasury, 2022 Recovery Plan Performance Report

Designing Data Visuals

- There are a lot of vacancies in Baltimore, and there are plans for new developments.
 - I learned about **geospatial analytics** to look at which areas have more vacancies and where key development plans are made.
 - I created a similar, but **interactive**, graph with more developments shown.
- (It may be used on the office web page to help Baltimore's residents be able to see progress with the projects.)



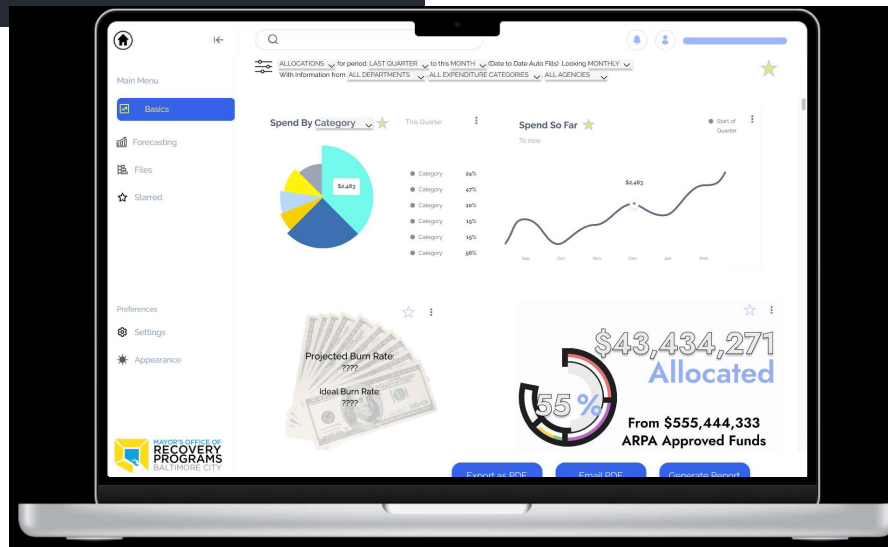
From City of Baltimore Mayor's Office of Recovery Programs Annual Report to Treasury, 2022 Recovery Plan Performance Report

Project Management/Planning

Ideal Application Emphasis



- Using UX Research and Data Collection techniques to interview and survey stakeholders.
- Looking at similar technologies and interviewing people in similar fields to find where the pain points of use are.
- Organizing the information to guide the creation of **wireframes**, suggestions, and a **research document**.
- My work will be used as a guide while developing a much- anticipated **forecasting tool** (web application).



Other Tasks

- Guiding Project Managers and other employees in learning about ASANA Enterprise project management tool.
- Cleaning data and finding insights regarding representation for generally underrepresented groups among the leadership within organizations that are receiving ARPA funding.
- Truly getting to know Baltimore by finding coordinates of key development projects across several neighborhoods to use for geospatial mapping in R.
- Worked on data mitigation, data entry, and other tasks as needed.



Impact

- Reports that contained insights that I found and visuals that I made are being used by the City of Baltimore, including documents that have been sent to the Mayor and other key figures.
- Shared actionable insights about ARPA funding allocations.
- Created charts that may be used in future reports.
- Made an interactive map of key developments in areas of high vacancies that can be used in public- facing communications once more data is obtained.



Key Takeaways/ Skills

- Learned R Programming Language to clean, analyze, and visualize data.
- Used programs such as R- Studio, Excel, and SharePoint to analyze data.
- Learned about public interest tech and appreciated how there are tangible impacts when you know what you are working for.
- Learned about the use of data and technology within government agencies.
- Learned about the capabilities of automation with Selenium and other useful tools.
- Learned about how projects are organized and managed in local government agencies.



Contact

royt.inessa@gmail.com

(347) 607-4548

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/inessa-royt/>

