

# City of Alexandria

## HOME-ARP Allocation Plan



### [Abstract](#)

The City of Alexandria has been allocated HOME-ARP funds through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. HOME-ARP funds assist individuals or households who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, and other vulnerable populations, by helping to increase housing stability. This plan outlines the State's intended uses of HOME-ARP funds to achieve these outcomes.

February 2023

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## 1. Executive Summary

The American Rescue Plan of 2021 (ARP), also called the COVID-19 Stimulus Package, Pub.L. 117–2 (March 11, 2021) provides \$5 billion to assist individuals or households who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, and other vulnerable populations, by providing housing, rental assistance, supportive services, and non-congregate shelter, to reduce homelessness and increase housing stability across the country. These grant funds will be administered through HUD's HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) and are known as HOME-ARP funds. Eligible HOME-ARP activities include acquisition and development of non-congregate shelter, tenant based rental assistance, supportive services, HOME-ARP rental housing, administration and planning, and nonprofit operating and capacity building assistance. A certain portion of HOME-ARP funds must assist people in HOME-ARP "qualifying populations," which include:

- Sheltered and unsheltered homeless populations, as defined in section 103(a) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302(a)); Those currently housed populations at risk of homelessness, as defined in section 401(1) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42U.S.C. 113060(1));
- Those fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking;
- Other families requiring services or housing assistance or to prevent homelessness

In September 2021, HUD announced that the City of Alexandria will receive \$937,270 in HOME-ARP funds. This supplemental funding was allocated by formula under the HOME entitlement program. To receive the HOME-ARP allocation, the City must develop a HOME-ARP Allocation Plan that will become part of the City's PY2021 HUD Annual Action Plan by substantial amendment. The Allocation Plan includes 1) an outline of the consultation and public participation processes undertaken, 2) an assessment of the needs of qualifying populations and gaps in local housing and services systems, and 3) planned uses of HOME-ARP funds for prioritized populations and eligible activities.

To ensure broad input into the HOME-ARP Allocation Plan from stakeholders and the public, the City engaged in consultation with stakeholders and the public, including an online survey, virtual consultation sessions, direct interviews with stakeholders, a 15-day public comment period, and a public hearing.

The needs assessment and gap analysis identified the following needs and gaps that may be addressed using HOME-ARP funds:

- A 2020 Point-In-Time (PIT) count found a total of 107 persons were experiencing homelessness in the City of Alexandria. Of those, a total of 16 persons (15%) were unsheltered, and 13 persons (12%) were identified as chronically homeless.
- Households earning between 0-30% AMI are more likely to pay more than 30% of their income towards housing expenses making them at risk for homelessness. Among all renters in Alexandria who are cost burdened, 35% earn below 30% AMI and 66% earn below 50% AMI (a total of 2,765 households).
- According to the Emergency Rental Assistance Program reporting required by the U.S. Department of the Treasury, between January 2021 and January 2022, 27,101 households in Louisiana received rental assistance. Recent data (from May-August 2022) indicates a need for rental assistance that persists beyond the pandemic. During this period, 316 Rapides Parish renters received an average of roughly \$4,500 per household.
- The Household Pulse Survey measures the percentage of adults in households not current on rent or mortgage where eviction or foreclosure in the next two months is either very likely or somewhat likely. Reports from December 2022 indicate that as many as 60,000 households in the State of Louisiana may be at immediate risk of eviction.
- The current median cost of a rental unit in Alexandria was \$1,058 in November 2022. Nearby rents have increased by 21% from November 2019 to November 2022.

To address these needs and gaps, the City will utilize HOME-ARP funds the provision of Supportive Services.

## 2. Consultation

### A. Process

*Describe the consultation process including methods used and dates of consultation.*

In developing this Allocation Plan, the City conducted a diverse outreach strategy to engage the community and stakeholders through three methods. An online survey was published in English and Spanish, community consultation was held, and direct one-on-one outreach to stakeholders was conducted to collect specific information around needs of qualifying populations. This section summarizes the consultation efforts made by the City.

The City's HOME-ARP Community Needs Survey was open from June 27 to August 29, 2022. The survey was made available in English and Spanish and received a total of 12 responses. The survey explored issues of fair housing, housing affordability, and the needs of those experiencing homelessness, at risk of homelessness, and other vulnerable populations. When asked about the greatest housing needs that can be addressed with HOME-ARP funds, 91% of respondents said supportive services and the production of new housing units were either very important or somewhat important. About 68% said tenant based rental assistance was either very important or somewhat important. About 64% said development of non-congregate shelter was very important or somewhat important. With respect to services that can be funded with HOME-ARP, case management services, employment assistance, life skills training, mental health services, outreach services, services for those fleeing abuse and neglect, and supplemental food assistance were all ranked as top priorities. Written responses to an open-ended question asking about community needs for qualifying populations contained themes related assistance for people who are blind and for vulnerable youth.

The City also convened a Citizen Advisory Committee meeting on January 19, 2023 during which it discussed ways that HOME-ARP funds can serve qualifying populations.

Finally, the City engaged stakeholders one-on-one to further explore the needs of those experiencing homelessness, those at risk of homelessness, and other vulnerable populations. Invitations for interviews were sent to 10 stakeholders and the overall themes from these conversations included the need for more affordable units, the need for services to vulnerable populations, and support for case management and navigator roles. Stakeholders

discussed the increases in rents and the difficulty in finding landlords willing to participate in voucher programs as the main obstacle to finding affordable housing.

## B. Organizations Consulted

*List the organizations consulted.*

Agency/Organization	Type of Organization	If a Service Provider, Qualifying Population Served	Method of Consultation
Central Louisiana Homelessness Coalition	COC	Homeless, At Risk of Homeless, Vulnerable Populations, Fleeing Domestic Violence, Veterans	Community Meeting; Online Survey invitation, Stakeholder Interview
Hope House	Nonprofit	Homeless, At Risk of Homeless, Vulnerable Populations, Fleeing Domestic Violence, Youth	Community Meeting; Online Survey invitation, Stakeholder Interview
Salvation Army	Nonprofit	Homeless, At Risk of Homeless, Vulnerable Populations, Fleeing Domestic Violence, Veterans	Community Meeting; Online Survey invitation, Stakeholder Interview
Extra Mile	Nonprofit	Homeless, At Risk of Homeless, Vulnerable Populations, Fleeing Domestic Violence, Youth	Community Meeting; Online Survey invitation, Stakeholder Interview
Fostering the Community	Nonprofit	Homeless, At Risk of Homeless, Vulnerable Populations, Youth, Fleeing Domestic Violence, Human Trafficking	Stakeholder Interview
Alexandria Housing Authority	Public Housing Authority	Homeless, At Risk of Homeless, Vulnerable Populations	Community Meeting; Online Survey invitation, Stakeholder Interview
Central Louisiana Area Agency on Aging	Nonprofit	Homeless, At Risk of Homeless, Vulnerable Populations, Seniors	Community Meeting; Online Survey Invitation
City of Alexandria	Public Agency	Homeless, At Risk of Homeless, Vulnerable Populations	Community Meeting; Online Survey invitation, Stakeholder Interview
Alexandria Police Department	Public Agency	Homeless, At Risk of Homeless, Vulnerable Populations, Fleeing Domestic Violence	Stakeholder Interview
Ritchie Real Estate	Housing Developer	N/A	Community Meeting; Online Survey Invitation
Greater New Orleans Fair Housing	Nonprofit	Fair Housing	Online Survey Invitation

### C. Summary of Feedback Received

*Summarize feedback received and results of upfront consultation with these entities.*

Largely the public and stakeholders agreed that the needs lie primarily in accessing more affordable housing units and providing services that can address case management and provide supportive services to vulnerable populations. See more detailed discussion of consultation in Section 2.A.

## 3. Public Participation

### A. Process

*Describe the public participation process, including information about and the dates of the public comment period and public hearing(s) held during the development of the plan.*

The City began its public participation process with a Community Needs Survey distributed throughout community. This survey was utilized to gather information from respondents on their views on the specific needs and priorities within their communities. After the completion of the Community Needs Survey process, survey data was evaluated, and this information was utilized as a starting point for discussion with various individuals, groups, and organizations during citizen advisory meetings and one-on-one stakeholder interviews. This wide variety of contacts included: local officials, substance abuse and mental health organizations, COCs, housing advocates and developers, homeless services advocates, and other members of the public. The City met with the public and stakeholders during its Citizen Advisory Board meetings and reached out to stakeholders for targeted feedback on the needs of qualifying populations.

Once drafted, the plan was released for a 15-day comment period beginning February 10, 2023. A copy of the Draft was posted on the City's website.

#### Date of Public Notice:

The notice announcing the public comment period and public hearing was published on February 10, 2023. See attached Appendix B.



### Public Comment Period:

A 15-day public comment period during which the draft was available on the City's website began on February 10, 2022 and ended at 5 pm on February 27, 2023.

### Date of Public Hearing:

A public hearing was held on February 23, 2023.

## B. Efforts to Broaden Public Participation

*Describe efforts to broaden public participation.*

Efforts to broaden community participation included holding public meetings and conducting an online survey to reach people in a variety of methods. The Community Needs Survey was available in English and Spanish. Accommodations are made for people with disabilities upon request.

## C. Comments and Recommendations Received

*Summarize the comments and recommendations received through the public participation process either in writing, or orally at a public hearing.*

- TO BE SUMMARIZED AFTER 15-DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

## D. Comments or Recommendations Not Accepted

*Summarize any comments or recommendations not accepted and state the reasons why.*

- TO BE COMPLETED AFTER 15-DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

## 4. Needs Assessment and Gaps Analysis

### A. Size and Demographic Composition of Qualifying Populations

*Describe the size and demographic composition of qualifying populations within the PJ's boundaries.*

The needs assessment and gap analysis must evaluate the “demographic composition of qualifying populations within its boundaries and assess the unmet needs of those populations.”<sup>1</sup>

The qualifying populations are as followed:

- Homeless
- At risk of Homelessness
- Fleeing, or Attempting to Flee, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, or Human Trafficking
- Veterans and Families that include a Veteran Family Member
- Other Populations (Other Families Requiring Services or Housing Assistance to Prevent Homelessness and Households at Greatest Risk of Instability)

There are several demographic overlaps of these discreet qualifying population categories as defined in the HOME ARP Guidance. For this needs assessment section, two primary categories will be used, Homeless and At Risk of Homeless. Within these large categories, needs and gaps of other qualifying populations will be described.

#### Homeless Individuals, as defined in 24 CFR 91.5

According to the HUD Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Programs Homeless Populations and Subpopulations data for the Alexandria/Central Louisiana CoC from 2020, 107 persons were identified as homeless, with 91 (85%) of those persons sheltered, and 13 (12%) identified as chronically homeless.

As shown in the summaries below for the Central Louisiana CoC, households without children represented about 73% of the homeless households, and about 58% of people experiencing homelessness were in households without children. Nearly 6% of homeless individuals were under 18. Roughly 69% of individuals were male, about 31% were female, and no individuals identified as non-conforming, nonbinary, or transgender.

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<sup>1</sup> HOME ARP Guidance.

**LA-507 Alexandria/Central Louisiana CoC**

**Point-in Time Date: 1/28/2020**

**Summary by household type reported:**

	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing*		
Households without children <sup>1</sup>	29	26	16	71
Households with at least one adult and one child <sup>2</sup>	0	9	0	9
Households with only children <sup>3</sup>	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Homeless Households</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>80</b>

**Summary of persons in each household type:**

	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing*		
<b>Persons in households without children<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>40</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>82</b>
Persons Age 18 to 24	3	4	1	8
Persons Over Age 24	37	22	15	74
<b>Persons in households with at least one adult and one child<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25</b>
Children Under Age 18	0	16	0	16
Persons Age 18 to 24	0	2	0	2
Persons Over Age 24	0	7	0	7
<b>Persons in households with only children<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Homeless Persons</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>107</b>

**Demographic summary by ethnicity:**

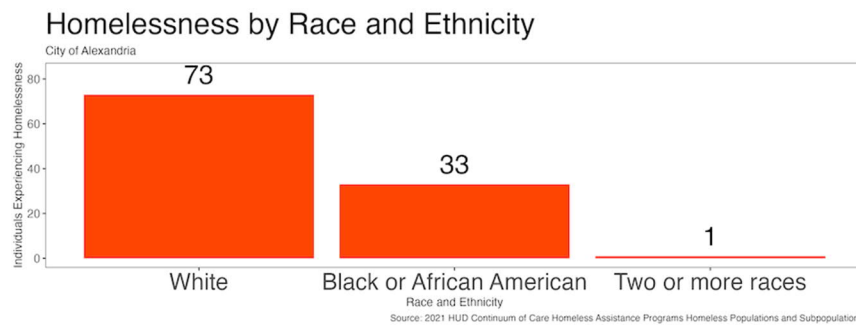
	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing*		
Hispanic / Latino	0	0	0	0
Non-Hispanic / Non- Latino	40	51	16	107
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>107</b>

**Demographic summary by gender:**

	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing*		
Female	6	25	2	33
Male	34	26	14	74
Transgender	0	0	0	0
Gender Non-Conforming (i.e. not exclusively male or female)	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>107</b>

Source: 2020 HUD Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Programs Homeless Populations and Subpopulations

With respect to race and ethnicity, about the figure below shows a complete breakdown of the 2020 Point-In-Time Count. 68.2% of the homeless population identified as white, and 30.8% identified as Black/African American. One individual identified by multiple races. None identified as Hispanic or Latino.



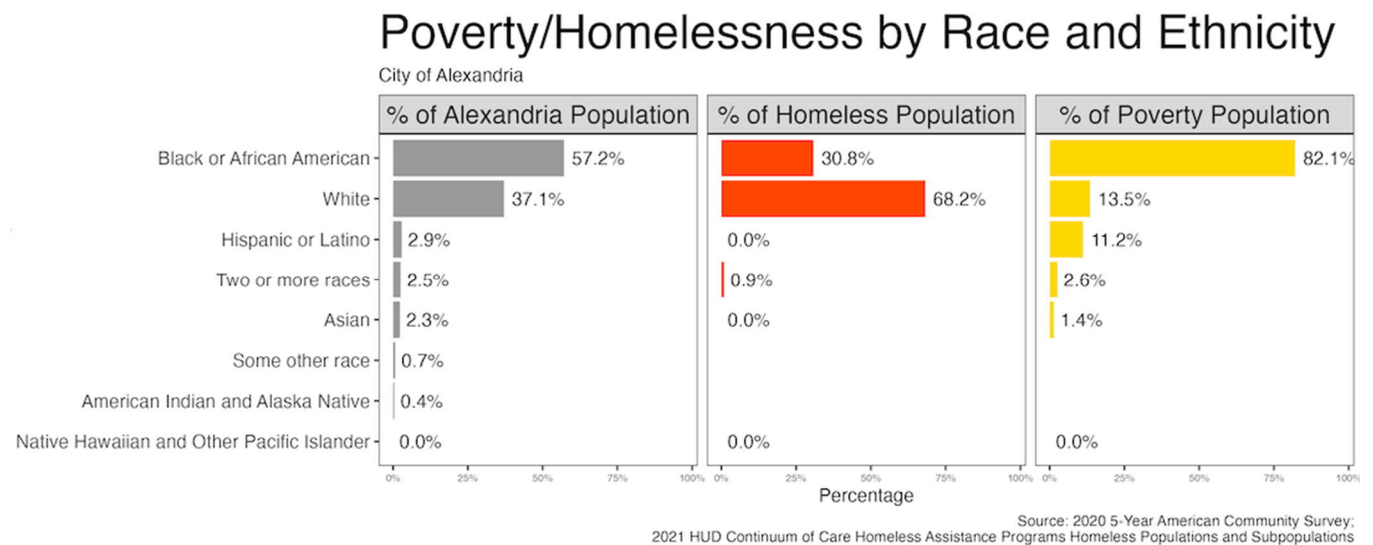
Source: 2021 HUD Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Programs Homeless Populations and Subpopulations

When looking at the different self-identified categories of homeless persons throughout Alexandria in 2021, nearly one in five suffered from a mental illness (18 individuals) and 9% (10 individuals) struggled with chronic substance abuse. Veterans made up 13% of the homeless

population. Victims of domestic violence and unaccompanied youth each made up 7% of the homeless population.

The figure below illustrates the racial breakdown of the total population in Alexandria, those living below the poverty line, and those experiencing homelessness. This data demonstrates that Black or African American individuals in Alexandria are overrepresented in the population experiencing poverty; roughly 8 of 10 individuals in Alexandria who experienced poverty identify as Black or African American. The population of those who experienced homelessness, however, was made up primarily of white individuals (68% of this population was white).

Alexandria residents who identify as Hispanic or Latino were also found to experience poverty at an outsized rate. Only 2.9% of the City's overall population identified as Hispanic or Latino, but 11.2% of the population experiencing poverty did.



### *Veterans, Victims of Domestic Violence, and other Categorized Populations*

HOME ARP Guidance specifically identifies individuals “Fleeing, or Attempting to Flee, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, or Human Trafficking” and “Veterans and Families that include a Veteran Family Member” as two qualifying populations eligible to receive assistance.

According to the 2020 Point-in-Time Count, 13% (14) of City’s homeless population are Veterans, and 7% (8) of the City’s homeless are victims of domestic violence. Stakeholders interviewed for this plan noted that victims of domestic violence are often undercounted in the homeless population, and so the true count of victims of domestic violence experiencing homelessness may be higher than reported in either year. Victims of domestic violence were more likely to be

found in transitional housing rather than emergency shelters. For veterans, the opposite was true; 57% of veterans were in emergency shelters.

The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) has prioritized ending homelessness among veterans, and organizations in Alexandria have also been working to end homelessness for veterans. Stakeholder feedback indicated that while there is work to be done, some success has been made in meeting these goals.

### *Homeless Families and Youth*

As shown in 2020 Point-In-Time table above, families with children represent 9 out of 80 households counted. Each of these households was sheltered and in transitional housing. The 2020 Point-In-Time Count found no chronically homeless families with children.

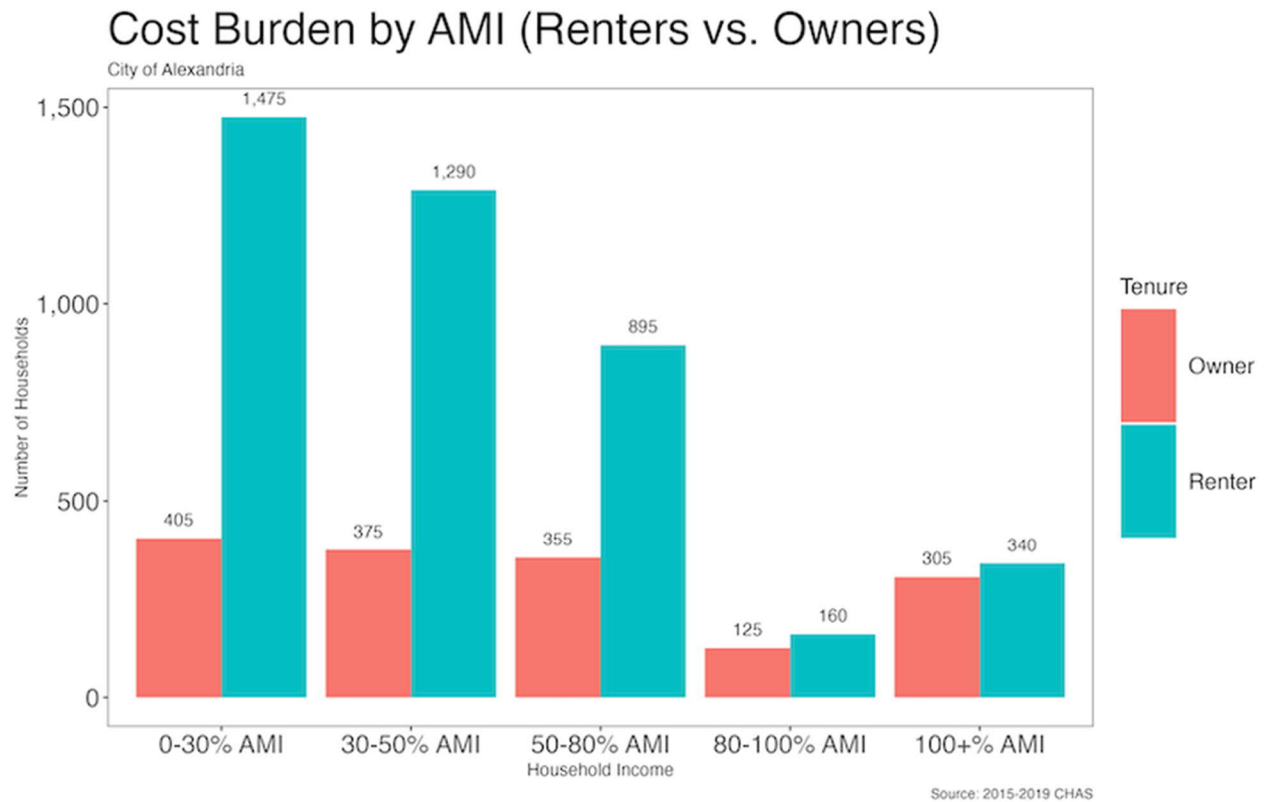
### *At Risk of Homelessness, as defined in 24 CFR 91.5*

As defined in the HOME ARP Guidance, households at risk of homelessness are those with incomes below 30% AMI that do not have resources or family, friend, or faith-based support networks to prevent homelessness, and:

1. Has moved because of economic reasons two or more times during the 60 days,
2. Lives in the home of another because of economic hardship,
3. Has received a 21-day eviction notice,
4. Lives in a hotel or motel, which is not paid for with assistance from a charitable organization or government,
5. Lives in overcrowded conditions as defined by HUD, OR
6. Is exiting a publicly funded institution or system of care.

Cost burden, which is the ratio of housing costs to household income, is an indication of housing need, and the need for reduced rental costs. For renters, housing cost is gross rent (contract rent plus utilities). For owners, housing cost is "select monthly owner costs," which includes mortgage payment, utilities, association fees, insurance, and real estate taxes. Renter households who pay more than 30% of their income for rent and utilities are considered cost burdened. In Alexandria, households earning between 0-30% AMI are more likely to pay more than 30% of their income

towards housing expenses.<sup>2</sup> Among all renters in Alexandria who earn less than 30% AMI, 71% are cost burdened (a total of 1,475 households).



Source: HUD Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) 2015-2019.

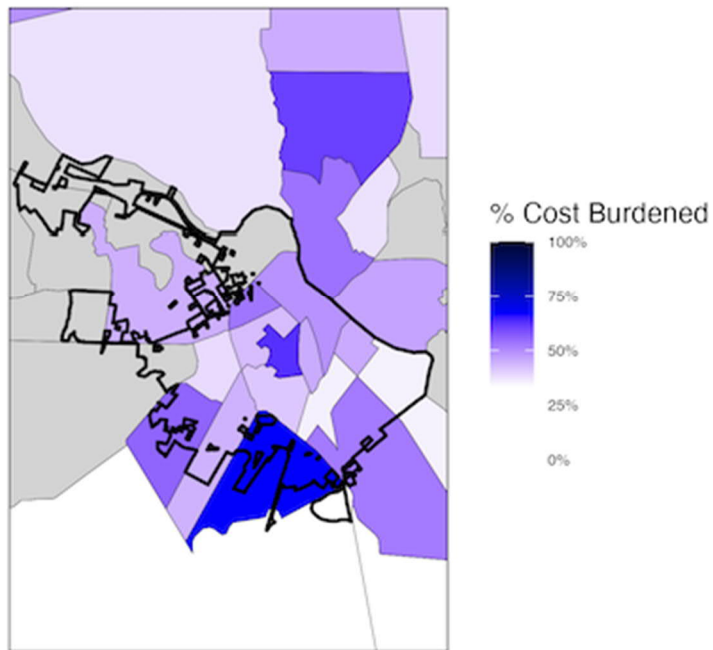
According to data from the 2015-2019 HUD Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy, there is not a single Alexandria census tract in which fewer than 25% of renter households were cost burdened. The heaviest concentration of cost burdened renter households could be found in the areas south of Highway 71:

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<sup>2</sup> Cost burden is the ratio of housing costs to household income. For renters, housing cost is gross rent (contract rent plus utilities). For owners, housing cost is "select monthly owner costs," which includes mortgage payment, utilities, association fees, insurance, and real estate taxes.

# Renter Households with Cost Burden

City of Alexandria



Source: 2015-2019 CHAS, Tigerline

## *COVID-19 Related Emergency Rental Assistance*

Many of the eligibility requirements for the U.S. Department of Treasury's Emergency Rental Assistance Programs overlap with HOME APR eligibility requirements, including:

- At risk of homelessness or experiencing housing instability (e.g. past due notice, non-payment of rent, or eviction notice) and
- A household income less than 80% AMI.<sup>3</sup>

Data from the Louisiana Emergency Rental Assistance Program can help quantify those individuals and households in Louisiana and Rapides Parish that are housing insecure. To better support applicants in completing applications for emergency rental assistance, the City provided

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<sup>3</sup> While 80% AMI is the upper limit of assistance, many state and local ERA programs have developed systems to prioritize assistance for households earning 30% AMI.

computers with internet access and personal assistance in 2021.<sup>4</sup> According to the Emergency Rental Assistance Program reporting required by the U.S. Department of the Treasury, the State of Louisiana has provided \$132 million in assistance to 27,101 renter households. Payments to Rapides Parish residents began in 2021 and recent statistics show continued need for assistance:

- In the month of August 2022 (the most recent date the data is available), payments totaling \$359,810 were allocated to 79 Rapides Parish renter households – an average of roughly \$4,500 per household.<sup>5</sup>
- From May-August 2022, 316 Rapides Parish residents were allocated a total of \$1.4 million in rental and utility assistance.

### *Housing Insecurity and Eviction*

Additionally, data collected in the online Household Pulse Survey, which measured housing insecurity throughout the COVID-19 pandemic found that household experiencing housing insecurity<sup>6</sup> in Louisiana was relatively stable between September 2020 to May 2022 (the latest data available).

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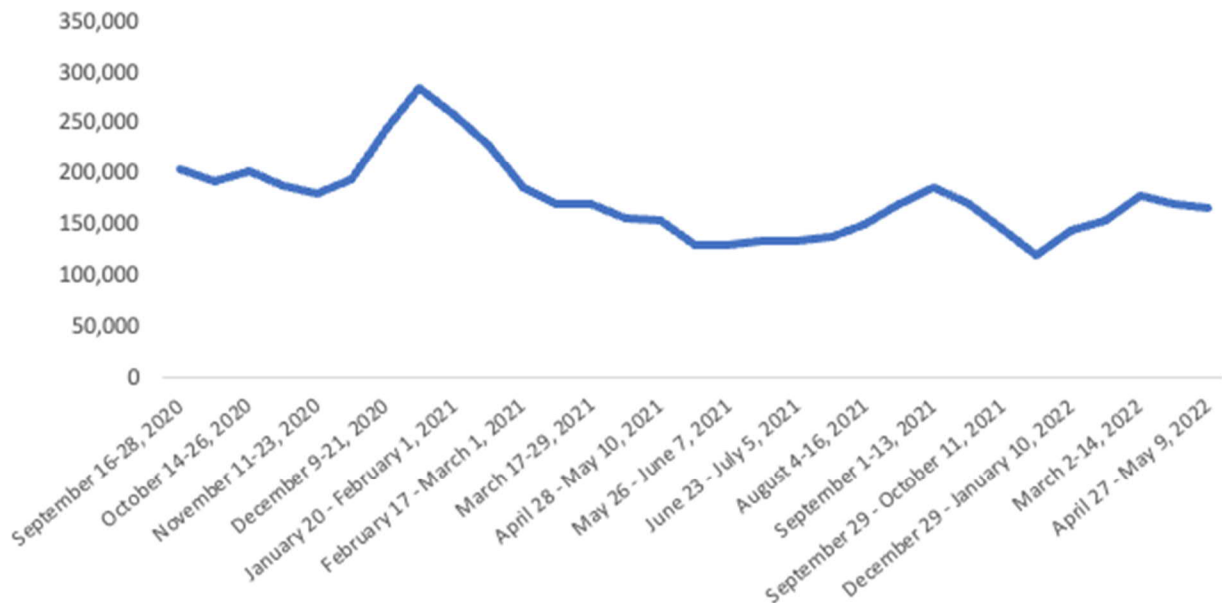
<sup>4</sup> "City offering residents help to apply for rental assistance, *KALB* (<https://www.kalb.com/2021/04/09/city-offering-residents-help-to-apply-for-rental-assistance/>)

<sup>5</sup> Program Status Reports, *Louisiana Emergency Rental Assistance Program* (<https://erap.lacovidhousing.com/pages/program-status-reports>)

<sup>6</sup>Housing Insecurity as defined by the Household Pulse Survey includes households that have missed the last months' rent or mortgage payment, or who have slight or no confidence that their household can pay next month's rent on time.



## Missed Payment / Low Payment Confidence State of Louisiana



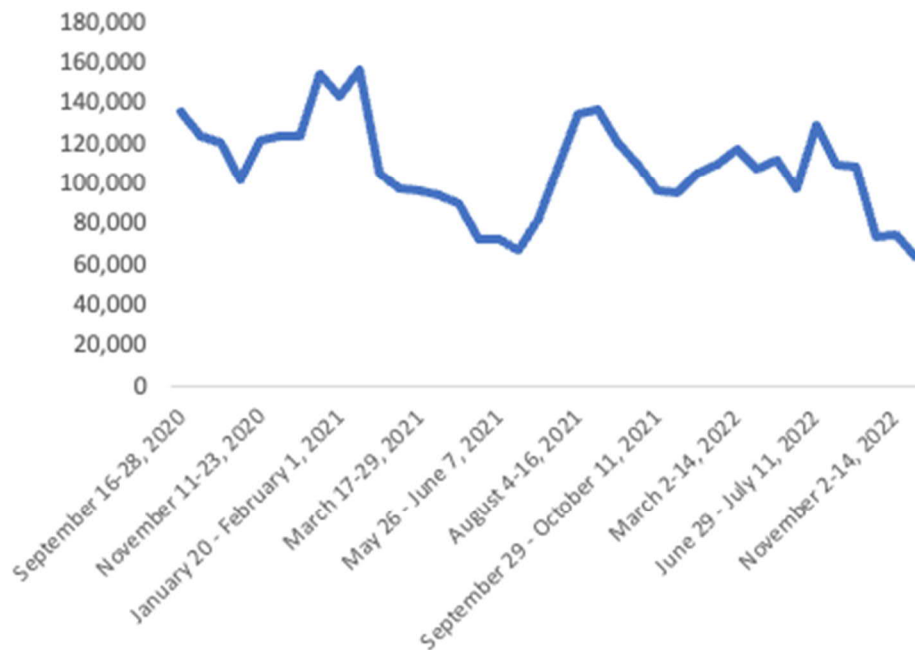
Low payment confidence is defined as: A three-month average of the number of adults in households that are not current on rent or mortgage payments and those that have slight or no confidence that their household can pay next month's rent or mortgage on time.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey

While the number of households throughout Louisiana experiencing housing insecurity has decreased since August 2020, this data helps establish a baseline data point of an average 165,000 households across Louisiana experiencing housing insecurity between 2020 and 2022.

The Household Pulse Survey also measures the percentage of adults in households not current on rent or mortgage were eviction or foreclosure in the next two months is either very likely or somewhat likely. The graph below details the residents in Louisiana reporting that eviction or foreclosure was likely between August 2020 and July 2022. While the trend of likely evictions or foreclosures has remained fairly stable over the period, over 60,000 households remain at risk of eviction as of December 2022.

## Households at Risk of Eviction State of Louisiana



Eviction risk is defined as: A three-month average of the number of households not current on rent or mortgage payments where eviction or foreclosure in the next two months is either very likely or somewhat likely.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey

[Fleeing, or Attempting to Flee, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, or Human Trafficking, as defined by HUD in the HOME-ARP Notice](#)

HOME ARP Guidance specifically identifies individuals “Fleeing, or Attempting to Flee, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, or Human Trafficking” as a specific qualifying population eligible to receive assistance. The 2021 PIT identified 8 homeless victims of domestic violence. Domestic violence service providers consulted for this Plan indicated that domestic violence is a concern in the community. The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence reports the following statistics for Louisiana:

- 35.9% of Louisiana women and 35.2% of Louisiana men experience intimate partner physical violence, intimate partner sexual violence and/or intimate partner stalking in their lifetimes.

- In 2017, Louisiana had the 2nd highest femicide rate in the United States. More than half of 2017 femicide victims were killed by intimate partners, and 70% of intimate partner femicides were committed using firearms.
- There has been at least one domestic homicide in every parish in Louisiana.
- As of December 31, 2019, Louisiana had submitted 34,873 domestic violence misdemeanor and 3,363 active protective order records to the NICS Index..

With respect to sex trafficking, stakeholders consulted noted that most of the human trafficking victims they encounter are youth. Nationally, each year 23,000 young adults age out of the foster care system. It is estimated that 70% of young people who become victims of human trafficking were in the child welfare system.

#### Other Populations Requiring Services or Housing Assistance to Prevent Homelessness and Other Populations at Greatest Risk of Housing Instability, as defined by HUD in the HOME-ARP Notice

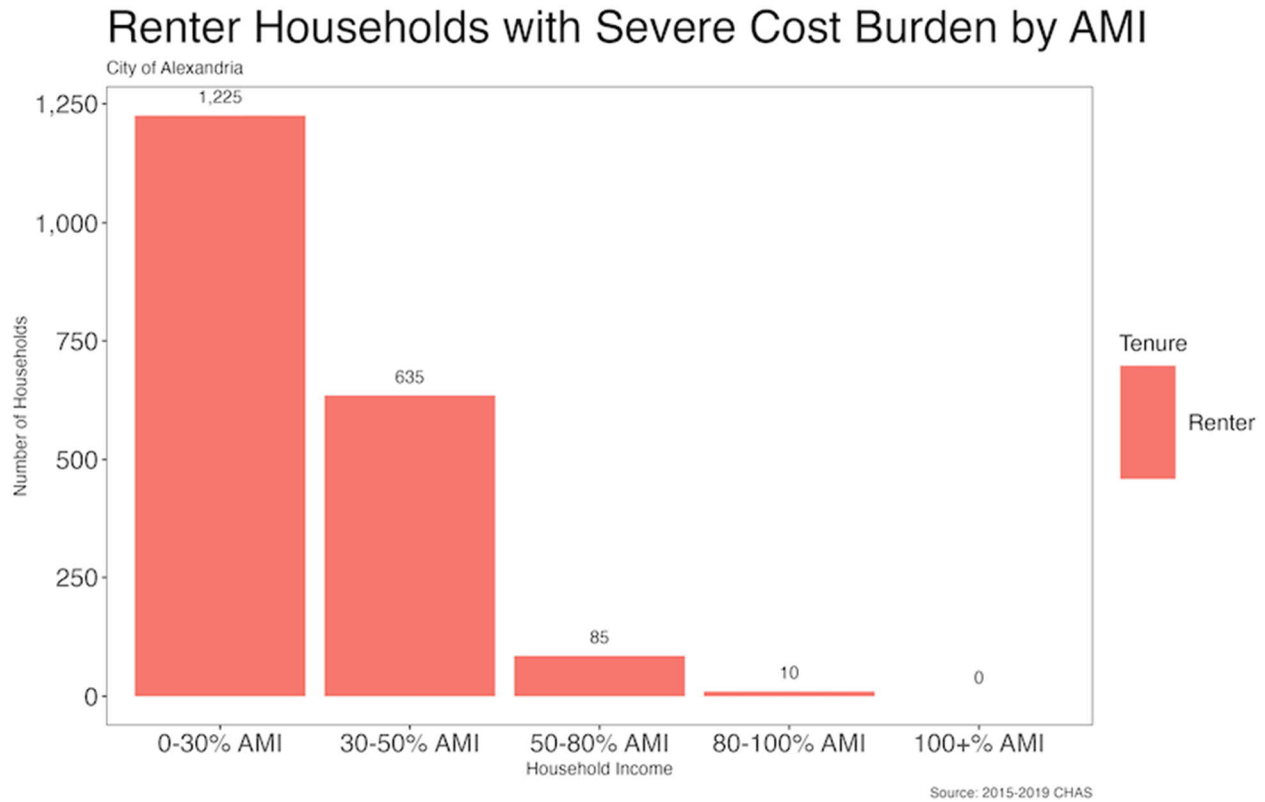
The HOME-ARP notice defines families *“Requiring Services or Housing Assistance to Prevent Homelessness”* as households (i.e., individuals and families) who have previously been qualified as “homeless” as defined in 24 CFR 91.5, are currently housed due to temporary or emergency assistance, including financial assistance, services, temporary rental assistance or some type of other assistance to allow the household to be housed, and who need additional housing assistance or supportive services to avoid a return to homelessness. See discussion above on demographics related to homelessness.

The HOME-ARP notice defines *“Other Populations at Greatest Risk of Housing Instability”* in two ways. The first definition includes those with annual income that is less than or equal to 30% of the area median income, as determined by HUD and is experiencing severe cost burden (i.e. is paying more than 50% of monthly income on housing costs.) In Alexandria, there are 1,510 extremely low income and severely cost burdened households, which places them at imminent risk of becoming homeless.

The second definition is that the household has an annual income that is less than or equal to 50% of the area median income, as determined by HUD, and meets one of the conditions of “At risk of homelessness.”

In Alexandria, there are 2,340 households earning between 0-50% AMI that are severely cost burdened or paying more than 50% of their income towards housing expenses.<sup>7</sup>

Of these severely cost-burdened households, 1,860 or about 79%, are renters and the majority are earning below 30% AMI.



Source: HUD Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) 2015-2019.

The below map shows the geographic distribution of the estimated percent of all renters who are severely cost burdened.<sup>8</sup> Areas with severe cost burden for renters overlap with those for which are highlighted previously, with areas south of Highway 71 showing the highest rate of renter households with a severe cost burden.

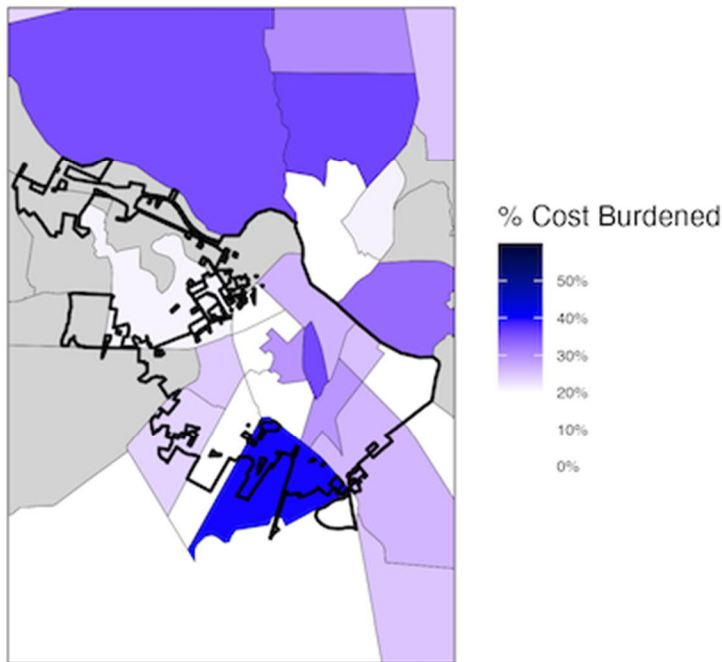
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<sup>7</sup> Cost burden is the ratio of housing costs to household income. For renters, housing cost is gross rent (contract rent plus utilities). For owners, housing cost is "select monthly owner costs," which includes mortgage payment, utilities, association fees, insurance, and real estate taxes.

<sup>8</sup> Severe Cost Burden: renter households for whom gross rent is 50% or more of household income.

# Renter Households with Severe Cost Burden

City of Alexandria



Source: 2015-2019 CHAS, Tigerline

HOME ARP Guidance specifically identifies “Veterans and Families that include a Veteran Family Member” as another eligible population under HOME-ARP. Veteran homelessness is discussed in the Homelessness section of this Plan.

## B. Current Resources Available to Assist Qualifying Populations

*Identify and consider the current resources available to assist qualifying populations, including congregate and non-congregate shelter units, supportive services, TBRA, and affordable and permanent supportive rental housing (Optional).*

### Congregate and Non-Congregate Shelter Units

As indicated in the 2021 HIC (Housing Inventory Count), the Alexandria/Central Louisiana CoC had 72 total year-round shelter beds for people experiencing homelessness: 10 are described as family units, 14 are described as “family beds,” and 58 are described as adult only beds. Of these total year-round shelter beds, 16 are reserved for veterans, and none are reserved for youth. In Alexandria, the Salvation Army provides shelter for single men. Over the past year, the organization has provided 38,000 meals and 12,000 shelter nights. Salvation Army is currently

working on plans to expand its shelter services to provide 32 additional beds that will also serve women and children. The HOPE House provides safe shelter and essential services to homeless families with a very limited number of emergency shelter beds. Additionally, the Central Louisiana Homelessness Coalition and Volunteers of America have leasing agreements to help house those experiencing homelessness, but these resources are also very limited.

### Supportive Services

A variety of support services exist in Alexandria through organizations like the United Way, Salvation Army, Hope House, Extra Mile, Fostering the Community, Central Louisiana Human Services District, and the Central Louisiana Area Agency on Aging, among other providers.

### Tenant Based Rental Assistance

In Alexandria, housing vouchers are available through the Alexandria Housing Authority (AHA). AHA is currently serving more than 600 families on the HCVP program.

### Affordable and Permanent Supportive Rental Housing

Currently, limited affordable and permanent supportive rental housing is available in Louisiana, however, the City has provided two letters of support for this round of low-income housing tax credits through the State of Louisiana for developments that would serve the community.

## C. Unmet Housing and Service Needs of Qualifying Populations

*Describe the unmet housing and service needs of qualifying populations.*

### Homeless Populations, as defined in 24 CFR 91.5.

The 2020 Point in Time Count for the Alexandria/Central Louisiana CoC found a total of 107 homeless individuals throughout the State. As indicated in the 2021 HIC (Housing Inventory Count), the Alexandria/Central Louisiana CoC had 72 total year-round shelter beds for people experiencing homelessness. Central Louisiana Homelessness Coalition estimates that approximately 120 beds would be needed to meet the needs of those experiencing homelessness. While other organizations provide some limited emergency shelter support, it is not enough to meet the needs of the community. Stakeholders also noted that there are almost no options for shelter for women and children as the resources are extremely limited and always at full capacity. Stakeholders working with this population also noted an increasing need for services to address substance abuse issues.

### At Risk of Homelessness, as defined in 24 CFR 91.5.

Cost burden and extreme cost burden are the most common housing problems for Alexandria households earning less than 30% AMI. Among all renters in Alexandria who are cost burdened, 72% earn below 50% AMI: 1,475 households under 30% AMI and 1,290 households between 30 and 50% AMI.

As incomes for many renters stay stagnant, costs of rents have been steadily increasing. Rental prices have been increasing since 2018 with sharper increases over the last two years. According to Zillow's Observed Rent Index, an online data source for rent information nationally, the current median cost of a rental unit in Alexandria was \$1,058 in November 2022. Due to its size, historical rent data for Rapides Parish is not available, but nearby Lafayette Parish (which had a comparable median rent total in November 2022<sup>9</sup>) experienced a 21% increase in median rent from November 2019 to November 2022. As rents increase, renters will spend increasingly higher percentages of their income on housing costs, which will further deepen concerns of housing instability.

### Fleeing, or Attempting to Flee, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, or Human Trafficking, as defined by HUD in the Notice

The Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence reported 4,403 in-state calls to its statewide Domestic Violence Hotline in 2021.<sup>10</sup> The Coalition also reported distributing over 270,000 resource requests, orders, and inquiries. Resource requests spiked in the fourth quarter of 2021 (see graphic below). Domestic violence or human trafficking survivors often lack easy access to short-term shelter and quick access to medical and mental health and other services.

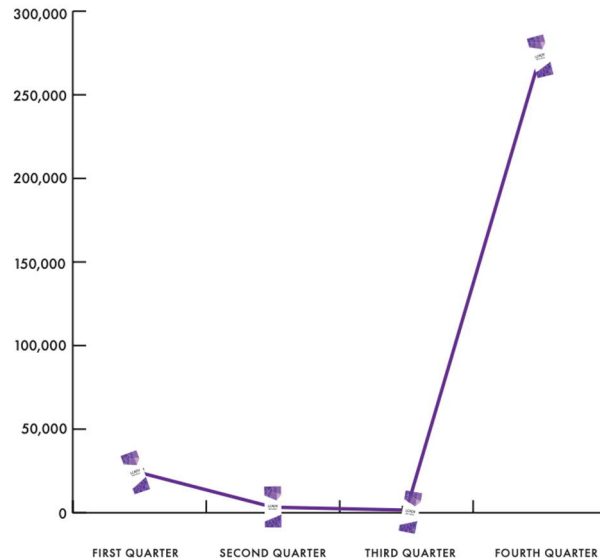
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<sup>9</sup> Per Apartment List's Data and Rent Estimates, Lafayette Parish had a median rent index of \$1,062 in November. Lafayette Parish (and the City of Lafayette) is roughly 90 miles from the City of Alexandria.

<sup>10</sup> Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence, *2021 Annual Report* ([https://bk485e.p3cdn1.secureserver.net/wp-content/uploads/Annual-Report-2021\\_Digital.pdf](https://bk485e.p3cdn1.secureserver.net/wp-content/uploads/Annual-Report-2021_Digital.pdf))

### Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence: 2021 Resource Requests by Quarter

LCADV saw a significant increase in resource requests, orders, and inquiries from our member programs and community allies. In 2021 we distributed a total of **272,193** resources.



Source: Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 2021 Annual Report

Locally, Hope House provides support to those fleeing domestic violence. Those fleeing domestic violence who use intervention services (e.g., counseling, information services, human resources, or employment assistance programs), and other workplace support services have a much better positive outcome, including a more positive outlook, greater drive to achieve their goals, better mental health, stronger workplace performance, and lower rates of absenteeism. All stakeholders we consulted indicated a greater need for service funding for those fleeing domestic violence and, importantly, a need for the services to be more easily accessible to those in need.

Further, the programs and needs of children experiencing domestic violence have increased with the rising incidents of violence in families making their needs a heightened priority. Children need an environment with programs to address the trauma they have experienced. High rates of domestic violence in Louisiana make children living in the state more likely to encounter adverse childhood experiences.

With respect to those fleeing sex trafficking, stakeholders reported that these populations tend to be youth, especially those aged out of foster care.



## Other Populations Requiring Services or Housing Assistance to Prevent Homelessness and Other Populations at Greatest Risk of Housing Instability, as defined by HUD in the HOME-ARP Notice

Extremely low income and severely cost burdened households are those with housing expenses greater than 50% of their income and earning less than 30% AMI. In the City of Alexandria, there are 1,860 renter households earning between 0-50% AMI that are severely cost burdened or paying more than 50% of their income towards housing expenses.<sup>11</sup>

The issues already discussed in the previous sections for those at risk of homelessness, including cost burden, apply equally to those facing housing instability.

### D. Gaps within Current Shelter and Housing Inventory and Service Delivery Systems

*Identify any gaps within the current shelter and housing inventory as well as the service delivery system.*

As described throughout this Plan, the consultation with residents and stakeholders reveals a gap in affordable units due to rising rents and decreasing vacancy. Service providers have seen a significant strain on both temporary and permanent shelter for those who request it daily. As discussed previously, the median rent in the City of Alexandria surpassed \$1,000 in 2022. As individuals become housing insecure or homeless, it becomes more difficult to find housing for them in a market where prices are increasing and housing stock is limited.

With respect to shelter, the CENLA Homeless Coalition estimates that about 120 shelter beds are needed while only 72 year round shelter beds exist and very few options are available for women and children.

Services needs in the community continue to grow as strains on mental health, the impact of the opioid epidemic, the effects of the pandemic, and rising housing instability increase demand for resources that address basic human needs and overall wellness.

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<sup>11</sup> Cost burden is the ratio of housing costs to household income. For renters, housing cost is gross rent (contract rent plus utilities). For owners, housing cost is "select monthly owner costs," which includes mortgage payment, utilities, association fees, insurance, and real estate taxes.

## E. Additional Characteristics Associated with Instability and Increased Risk of Homelessness

*Optional: Under Section IV.4.2.ii.G of the HOME-ARP Notice, a PJ may provide additional characteristics associated with instability and increased risk of homelessness in their HOME- ARP allocation plan. These characteristics will further refine the definition of “other populations” that are “At Greatest Risk of Housing Instability,” as established in the HOME-ARP Notice. If including these characteristics, identify them here.*

The City does not plan to formally adopt additional definitions of “other populations,” however, a look at additional characteristics that can help clarify the stressors on those facing housing instability in Alexandria is useful. The high-cost burden is a housing characteristic strongly linked with instability and an increased risk of homelessness. In ability to earn a living wage directly affects the cost burden that households face. The current state minimum wage is \$7.25/hour. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Department of Urban Studies and Planning Living Wage Calculator reported the Rapides Parish living wage for an individual is \$15.07. A single parent with three children would need to earn at least \$50.40 per hour to make a livable wage. Two working parents with three children would need to earn at least \$25.68 each per hour to sustain a livable wage.

## F. Identify Priority Needs for Qualifying Populations

*Identify priority needs for qualifying populations.*

The following priority needs have been identified for qualifying populations:

- Supportive services for vulnerable populations to prevent housing instability and to meet basic human needs
- Diversion programs, case management, and housing navigation to prevent homelessness
- Shelter space that can accommodate women and children experiencing homelessness or fleeing domestic violence
- Affordable housing units

## G. Determination of Level of Need and Gaps in Shelter and Housing Inventory and Service Delivery Systems

*Explain how the PJ determined the level of need and gaps in the PJ's shelter and housing inventory and service delivery systems based on the data presented in the plan.*

Determination of level of need and gaps in shelter and housing inventory and service delivery was determined through an analysis of data and series of community outreach efforts, including an online survey and stakeholder interviews. The data presented in this Allocation Plan is a compilation of data collected from Census, ACS, CHAS, PIT count, data from organizations on the populations served through their programs, and the current Consolidated Plan. All the sources have various methodologies and went through extensive public consultation process including multiple public hearings. Stakeholders consulted to assess need and gaps included the public, the COC, homeless service providers, veterans' groups, domestic violence agencies, the public housing agency and other public or private organizations that address fair housing, civil rights, and the needs of persons with disabilities.

## 5. HOME-ARP Activities

### A. Method(s) of Selection

*Describe the method(s) that will be used for soliciting applications for funding and/or selecting developers, service providers, subrecipients and/or contractors.*

HOME-ARP is a new one-time funding program authorized by the American Recovery Plan Act of 2021. HOME-ARP program requirements do not mirror the requirements of the HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME program) and potential applicants should not rely on knowledge of the HOME program when contemplating or applying for HOME-ARP funding. Applicants are advised to review HOME-ARP Notice [CPD 21-10](#) on the HUD Exchange for more information.

The City will conduct a Request for Proposals for a specified period of time to provide for a competitive process in awarding HOME-ARP funds for supportive services. During that time any organization, agency, and subrecipients that provider supportive services are eligible to apply. At the close of the application period, all applications received will be reviewed for completeness, eligibility, and their ability to deliver on the priority needs identified within this plan. Each applicant will also be reviewed for their ability to carry out the project meeting all eligibility

criteria. Award(s) will be made based on the applicant's project scope as it pertains to the outlined priority needs in this plan as well as the applicant's familiarity with utilizing federal funding and ability to comply with all federal and local requirements.

## B. Direct Administration by PJ

*Describe whether the PJ will administer eligible activities directly.*

The City will contract with subgrantees for the implementation of activities and monitor all activity delivery.

## C. No Use of Subrecipient

*If any portion of the PJ's HOME-ARP administrative funds are provided to a subrecipient or contractor prior to HUD's acceptance of the HOME-ARP allocation plan because the subrecipient or contractor is responsible for the administration of the PJ's entire HOME-ARP grant, identify the subrecipient or contractor and describe its role and responsibilities in administering all of the PJ's HOME-ARP program*

The City has not provided funds to a subrecipient or contractor prior to HUD's acceptance of the HOME-ARP Allocation Plan and will not allocate funds to a subrecipient nor contractor to administer the entire HOME-ARP grant.

## D. Use of HOME-ARP Funding

*In accordance with Section V.C.2. of the Notice (page 4), PJs must indicate the amount of HOME-ARP funding that is planned for each eligible HOME-ARP activity type and demonstrate that any planned funding for nonprofit organization operating assistance, nonprofit capacity building, and administrative costs is within HOME-ARP limits.*

	Funding Amount	Percent of the Grant
Supportive Services	\$796,680	0.00%
Acquisition and Development of Non-Congregate Shelters	\$0.00	0.00%
Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)	\$0.00	0.00%
Development of Affordable Rental Housing	\$0.00	0.00%
Non-Profit Operating	\$0.00	0.00%
Non-Profit Capacity Building	\$0.00	0.00%
Administration and Planning	\$140,590.00	15.00%
Total HOME ARP Allocation	\$937,270	100.00%

### Distribution of HOME-ARP funds In Accordance with Priority Needs

*Describe how the PJ will distribute HOME-ARP funds in accordance with its priority needs identified in its needs assessment and gap analysis.*

The City will use HOME-ARP funds to support service programs for all qualifying populations. Needs identified in the assessment and gaps analysis included services such as navigation support for those seeking housing and services, homeless diversion programs, supplemental food programs, mental health counseling, substance abuse treatment, life skills training, and employment coaching, and general support services for those experiencing homelessness.

## Rationale Funding Based on Characteristic Needs Identified in the Gap Analysis

*Describe how the characteristics of the shelter and housing inventory, service delivery system, and the needs identified in the gap analysis provided a rationale for the plan to fund eligible activities.*

While the needs assessment and community outreach identified multiple priority needs, including the development of affordable housing and more shelter beds particularly for women and children, the general category most discussed were services to support vulnerable households to keep them housed and healthy. Further, current efforts in the community are underway to address the development of new affordable housing through low-income housing tax credits, if awarded, and to provide additional shelter beds through the expansion of the Salvation Army, which will grow to serve both women and children. The City determined that the service needs identified in the plan do not have additional resources identified at this time and that HOME-ARP can help to fill this need.

## 6. HOME-ARP Production Housing Goals

### A. Estimated Number of Affordable Rental Housing Units for Qualifying Populations

*Estimate the number of affordable rental housing units for qualifying populations that the PJ will produce or support with its HOME-ARP allocation.*

Not applicable to the proposed use of HOME-ARP funds for supportive services.

### B. Rental Housing Production Goals and Correspondence with Need

*Describe the specific affordable rental housing production goal that the PJ hopes to achieve and describe how the production goal will address the PJ's priority needs.*

Not applicable to the proposed use of HOME-ARP funds for supportive services.

## 7. Preferences

### Identification of Preference

*Identify whether the PJ intends to give preference to one or more qualifying populations or a subpopulation within one or more qualifying populations for any eligible activity or project.*

The City has not adopted any preferences among the qualified populations in soliciting proposals for supportive services. For any selected project, the City will ensure that the program complies with civil rights and non-discrimination laws.

## Using Preference to Address Unmet Need

*If a preference was identified, explain how the use of a preference or method of prioritization will address the unmet need or gap in benefits and services received by individuals and families in the qualifying population or subpopulation of qualifying population, consistent with the PJ's needs assessment and gap analysis.*

No preferences were identified.

## 8. Referral Methods

*PJs are not required to describe referral methods in the plan. However, if a PJ intends to use a coordinated entry (CE) process for referrals to a HOME-ARP project or activity, the PJ must ensure compliance with Section IV.C.2 of the Notice (page10).*

*Identify the referral methods that the PJ intends to use for its HOME-ARP projects and activities. PJ's may use multiple referral methods in its HOME-ARP program. (Optional)*

*If the PJ intends to use the CE process established by the CoC, describe the method of prioritization to be used by the CE. (Optional).*

*If the PJ intends to use both a CE process established by the CoC and another referral method for a project or activity, describe any method of prioritization between the two referral methods, if any. (Optional).*

Optional section.

## 9. Limitations in a HOME-ARP Rental Housing or NCS Project

*Describe whether the PJ intends to limit eligibility for a HOME-ARP rental housing or NCS project to a particular qualifying population or specific subpopulation of a qualifying population identified in section IV.A of the Notice.*

*If a PJ intends to implement a limitation, explain why the use of a limitation is necessary to address the unmet need or gap in benefits and services received by individuals and families in the qualifying population or subpopulation of qualifying population, consistent with the PJ's needs assessment and gap analysis.*

*If a limitation was identified, describe how the PJ will address the unmet needs or gaps in benefits and services of the other qualifying populations that are not included in the limitation through the use of HOME-ARP funds (i.e., through another of the PJ's HOME-ARP projects or activities).*

Not applicable. No limitations are being implemented.

## 10. HOME-ARP Refinancing Guidelines

*If the PJ intends to use HOME-ARP funds to refinance existing debt secured by multifamily rental housing that is being rehabilitated with HOME-ARP funds, the PJ must state its HOME-ARP refinancing guidelines in accordance with 24 CFR 92.206(b).*

Not applicable to proposed use of HOME-ARP funds for supportive services.



## APPENDIX A – Certifications and SF-424s

## APPENDIX B - PUBLIC NOTICES