The Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness
in the City of Alexandria

STRATEGIC PLAN TO PREVENT AND END HOMELESSNESS IN THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

FY2023 – FY2028

VISION

**Within the City of Alexandria, no one should experience homelessness -
no one should be without a safe, suitable, and stable place to call home**

MISSION

**To ensure the planning, coordination, and implementation of an effective and efficient
continuum of care to prevent and end homelessness in the City of Alexandria, Virginia**

BACKGROUND

The Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness (the Partnership) in the City of Alexandria is a broad and diverse group of homeless service providers, local government agencies, and community stakeholders working together to make homelessness rare and brief in the City. As the area's Continuum of Care, the Partnership is responsible for promoting a systematic approach towards local assistance to people at risk of or experiencing homelessness. In 2014, the Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in the city of Alexandria was created, and its goals aligned with the City's Strategic Plan initiatives and Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness. Since 2014, the Partnership made significant reductions in overall homelessness within the City of Alexandria, increased collaboration across multiple systems, improved organization and governance structure, and increased the quality and scope of data collection and analysis.

PROCESS

The process to create an updated strategic plan was delayed until the spring of 2021 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and all the challenges the Partnership and the City faced to ensure the safety and health of everyone who needed the services of the Partnership's members. In spring 2021, the Partnership's Governing Board established a Strategic Planning Committee whose members represented the various sectors of the Governing Board. The Strategic Planning Committee reviewed the progress made through the FY 2014-2020 Strategic Plan. They also reviewed the analysis and recommendations of the PPEH Stakeholders Focus Groups. Both information items were provided to the Governing Board along with a variety of other items including system performance data, eviction data, racial equity data in homelessness assistance/housing instability, and the Alexandria Community Health Improvement Plan 2025, the Alexandria Children and Youth Community Plan 2025, the Alexandria City Public Schools Equity for All Strategic Plan 2025 and the (CORE) Decision Making Tool.

In November 2021, the Strategic Planning Committee held a community meeting to obtain comments and ideas on the areas the Continuum was doing well, and areas that needed improvements, as well as issues and trends nationally, at the state level, and locally that have or may have a positive or negative impact on preventing and ending homelessness in

Alexandria. A summary of the participants' comments was provided in December 2021 to everyone who attended the meeting to obtain additional comments and any clarifications and edits needed to the comments.

The Strategic Planning Committee used a revised summary document to identify themes and to develop draft goals and objectives for the new strategic plan. They also created overarching themes for the strategic plan's goals and objectives as a result of the community members' comments in November. The Governing Board reviewed and provided comments on the goals and objectives and agreed with the changes. This draft of the strategic goals and objectives as provided to all participants from the November meeting for a "fatal flaw" review, meaning is there anything in among the goals and objectives that would be considered a fatal flaw in the plan if something is included or missing.

The revised Strategic Plan's goals, objectives, and strategies were adopted by the Partnership's Governing Board on March 22, 2023.

STRATEGIC PLAN'S OVERARCHING THEMES

- Center racial equity
- Regularly use input from those with lived expertise/informed voices to make decisions rooted in firsthand perspectives offered from those who have been homeless.

MEMBERSHIP

Alexandria DCHS/Center for Aging and Adult Services
Alexandria DCHS/Center for Economic Support
Alexandria DCHS/Center for Children and Families
Alexandria City Public Schools
Alexandria Code Enforcement
Alexandria Community Services Board
Alexandria Department of Health
Alexandria Domestic Violence Program
Alexandria Fire and EMS Department
Alexandria Housing Development Corporation
Alexandrians Involved Ecumenically
Alexandria Neighborhood Health Services, Inc.
Alexandria Office of Housing
Alexandria Police Department
Alexandria Redevelopment & Housing Authority
Arlington-Alexandria Coalition for the Homeless
Carpenter's Shelter
Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington
Christ Church Lazarus Ministry
Community Lodgings, Inc.
Community representatives
Diocese of Arlington - Christ House Men's Shelter
Friends of Guest House
Grass Roots Alexandria
Homeless Consumer Representatives
Workforce Investment Board
New Hope Housing, Inc.
Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance
Offender Aid and Restoration
Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria
Veterans Administration-Northern Virginia
Wesley Housing Development Corporation
Virginia Department of Corrections

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Increase Access to Affordable Housing and Housing Stability Services

Objective 1: Provide more affordable housing options to those experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness, focusing on those at 40% of the area median income and below.

> Strategy A: Identify and implement best practices and supports for referring clients with an eviction history or no rental history. (Note: A best practice is a practice that has been compared against a set of agreed-upon criteria among other similar practices and deemed the best among these practices.)
>
> - Responsible Party: Housing Crisis Response Committee
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> Strategy B: Create a broad working group to explore promising practices and options for creating more affordable housing for residents over 55. (Note: A promising practice is a practice that has been used by several localities and organizations that produced successful results and can be replicated by other localities or organizations with the intent that similar results will occur.)
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> - Responsible Party: PPEH Governing Board
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> Strategy C: Continue to advocate for subsidies to support increased development of units at 40% AMI and below.
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> - Responsible Party: Budget Advocacy Workgroup in the short-term and PPEH Governing Board in the long-term

Objective 2: Provide more permanent, housing choices and supportive services to address the needs of those experiencing chronic and recurrent homelessness.

> Strategy A: Create a reimbursement fund for housing providers/landlords.
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> - Responsible Party: PPEH Governing Board / Ad-Hoc Committee
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> Strategy B: Continue and expand expungement efforts of housing eviction records.
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> - Responsible Party: PPEH Governing Board
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> Strategy C: Identify and engage with points of contact of smaller service providers.
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> - Responsible Party: Housing Crisis Response Committee
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> Strategy D: Advocate for tenant protections.
> - Responsible Party: PPEH Governing Board

Objective 3: Advance housing stability, including both affordable housing choices and supportive services for vulnerable populations.

Strategy A: Continue to identify and address gaps in housing choices and supportive services through the PPEH Gaps and Needs Committee.

- Responsible Party: Gaps and Needs Committee

Strategy B: Continue to explore programs and support for residents who have experienced Domestic Violence.

- Responsible Party: Gaps and Needs Committee

Objective 4: Support initiatives to explore creative solutions to increasing housing stock, including supporting new use of zoning regulations, co-living, and ADUs.

Strategy A: Educate and partner with relevant City Boards and Commissions about the importance of such creative solutions to reducing homelessness.

- Responsible Party: PPEH Governing Board

Strategy B: Educate the public about the importance of such creative solutions to reducing homelessness.

- Responsible Party: PPEH Governing Board / PPEH Public Meeting Planning Workgroup

Goal 2: Increase Economic and Health Security

Objective 1: Expand and maintain access to meaningful and sustainable employment opportunities for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Strategy A: Work with the appropriate City offices and commissions to ensure that the City's Digital Equity Plan addresses access to technology and technology skills gaps of individuals lacking stable housing.

- Responsible Party: Gaps and Needs Committee

Strategy B: Educate people experiencing or at risk of homelessness and providers about the City's Workforce Development Center's Work-Based Learning Program.

- Responsible Party: Employment and Income Committee

Strategy C: Governing Board representatives attend at least twice a year Commission on Employment meeting to determine how best to connect the needs of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness with the Commission's work plan at. of the .

- Responsible Party: Employment and Income Committee

Objective 2: Improve access to programs and services to reduce people's financial vulnerability to homelessness.

Strategy A: Engage with ridesharing services for discounted transportation of individuals residing in homeless assistance programs.

- Responsible Party: Housing Crisis Response Committee

Strategy B: Partner with DASH to increase the awareness of free rides for everyone in Alexandria.

- Responsible Party: PPEH Governing Board / Public Meeting Planning Workgroup

Strategy C: Partner with Hunger Free Alexandria to increase the awareness of food services within The City.

- Responsible Party: PPEH Governing Board / Public Meeting Planning Workgroup

Objective 3: Integrate primary and behavioral health care services with homeless assistance programs and housing to reduce people's vulnerability to and the impacts of homelessness.

Strategy A: Partner with the Partnership for Healthier Alexandria to hold a health forum with healthcare providers to identify and create solutions for addressing barriers to health care. Topics should include specialized care for chronic health conditions such as kidney disease, heart disease, cancer, and diabetes.

- Responsible Party: Gaps and Needs Committee

Strategy B: Partner with the Partnership for Healthier Alexandria to create and maintain a directory of providers that accept Medicaid.

- Responsible Party: Gaps and Needs Committee

Strategy C: Partner with the Alexandria Health Dept. and Neighborhood Health to maintain access to vaccines, boosters, PPE, and other necessary health supports.

- Responsible Party: Gaps and Needs Committee

Strategy D: Partner with the Alexandria Community Services Board to maintain access to behavioral health supports.

- Responsible Party: Gaps and Needs Committee

Strategy E: Work with Neighborhood Health to set up a referral system for housing/homelessness case managers whose clients wish to access primary care to eliminate scheduling and eligibility barriers.

- Responsible Party: Gaps and Needs Committee

Goal 3: Increase Community Support and Funding for Housing Affordability and Housing Stability Services

Objective 1: Strengthen the capacity of public and private organizations to speak knowledgeably about the importance of and need for affordable housing as well as the benefits to the entire community of preventing and ending homelessness.

Strategy A: Engage with the Offices on Housing and Planning and Zoning on needed zoning changes.

- Responsible Party: PPEH Governing Board

Strategy B: Engage with the Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Council (AHAAC) on needed zoning changes.

- Responsible Party: PPEH Governing Board

Strategy C: Advocate for more even geographic disbursement of affordable housing throughout the city.

- Responsible Party: PPEH Governing Board

Objective 2: Increase the availability of information about the causes and extent of homelessness and overcrowding to inspire and energize community members to advocate for preventing and ending homelessness.

Strategy A: Create a series of information briefs on homelessness and disseminate them to City Boards and Commissions and make them available to the public.

- Responsible Party: PPEH Governing Board / Public Meeting Planning Workgroup

Objective 3: Highlight the voices of those with lived experience to advocate for preventing and ending homelessness.

Strategy A: Create and disseminate media on the causes of homelessness and the impact of stable housing on persons with lived experience to dispel misconceptions about homeless experiences.

- Responsible Party: PPEH Governing Board / Public Meeting Planning Workgroup / Racial Equity Action Committee

Strategy B: Use consumer focus groups in CoC planning activities and ensure that participants are appropriately compensated.

- Responsible Party: Racial Equity Action Committee

Objective 4: Align and connect funding, policies, services, and other resources to prevent and end homelessness.

Strategy A: Advocate for giving preference to persons experiencing homelessness for receiving mainstream services.

- Responsible Party: PPEH Governing Board

Strategy B: Assure all those working with persons experiencing or at risk of homelessness know of community support and eligibility.

- Responsible Party: PPEH Governing Board / Public Meeting Planning Workgroup / Housing Crisis Response Committee

Goal 4: Strengthen and Expand Collaborations and Partnerships

Objective 1: Provide and promote collaborative leadership at all levels of government and sectors to prevent and end homelessness.

Strategy A: Partner with ARHA on an information session regarding the availability of housing vouchers, housing voucher application process, wait lists, etc.

- Responsible Party: PPEH Governing Board / Public Meeting Planning Workgroup

Strategy B: Partner with RAISE to hold Trauma Informed Care Workshops.

- Responsible Party: PPEH Governing Board / Public Meeting Planning Workgroup

Strategy C: Partner with Alexandria City Public Schools on information sharing regarding the connections between educational support and stability for students experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness and homelessness prevention strategies.

- Responsible Party: PPEH Governing Board / Public Meeting Planning Workgroup

Objective 2: Assure that everyone involved in preventing and ending homelessness, providing affordable housing, and offering supportive services is brought into the conversation and encouraged to collaborate.

Strategy A: Ensure that PPEH Full Partnership meetings are action and solution-focused

- Responsible Party: PPEH Governing Board / Public Meeting Planning Workgroup

Strategy B: Establish and maintain mechanisms for elevating the perspective of persons with lived experience.

- Responsible Party: Racial Equity Action Committee

Goal 5: Continue Improvement of the Housing Stability Response System

Objective 1: Assure that homeless prevention systems respond to those in housing crisis, working effectively and efficiently to meet people where they are to prevent homelessness and provide supportive services they need to maintain housing.

Strategy A: Create a flow of information to the PPEH Governing Board concerning homeless prevention systems, definitions, and their impact

- Responsible Party: Gaps and Needs Committee / Data Committee

Strategy B: Continue to collaborate with Eviction Prevention Taskforce to highlight prevention efforts, and advocate for sustainable prevention resources

- Responsible Party: PPEH Governing Board

Objective 2: Assure that systems responding to those in housing crisis are working effectively and efficiently to rapidly return people who experience homelessness to stable housing.

Strategy A: Maintain the flow of information from the appropriate CoC Committees to the PPEH Governing Board

- Responsible Party: Gaps and Needs Committee

Strategy B: Explore the development of an appropriate feedback system for persons to comment on their experience with the housing stability system

- Responsible Party: Racial Equity Action Committee

Strategy C: Examine the current emergency shelter utilization and demand to ensure that capacity and populations effectively and efficiently meet the need.

- Responsible Party: Gaps and Needs Committee / Data Committee / Housing Crisis Response Committee

Objective 3: Continue to review and improve the housing stability systems responding to those in housing crisis to reduce barriers to services.

Strategy A: Continue the work of the PPEH Gaps and Needs Committee

- Responsible Party: Gaps and Needs Committee

Strategy B: Continue collaboration with neighboring jurisdictions and the Metropolitan-Washington Council of Governments to highlight best practices

- Responsible Party: PPEH Governing Board

Objective 4: Continue to improve data quality and collection, including disaggregating data by race and ethnicity, to ensure data-driven decisions and a data-responsive system.

Strategy A: Continue the work of the PPEH Data Committee

- Responsible Party: Data Committee / Racial Equity Action Committee / Gaps and Needs Committee

Strategy B: Continue collaboration with the Alexandria Office of Race and Social Equity to highlight best practices

- Responsible Party: Racial Equity Action Committee

Strategy C: Continue to update housing prioritization algorithm to follow racially equitable trends

- Responsible Party: Racial Equity Action Committee