



# ALEXANDRIA'S COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2025 SPRING 2023 PROGRESS REPORT

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Prepared by Alexandria Health Department and the  
Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria

May 5, 2023

# REPORT SUMMARY

## The CHIP

The [Community Health Improvement Plan \(CHIP\) 2025](#) is our community's roadmap and action plan for addressing the most important health issues in Alexandria. Specifically, this plan highlights ways that organizations are working collaboratively to improve health for all Alexandrians.

The priority areas of the CHIP are based on the results of the [Community Health Assessment](#) and were selected by community members: *poverty*, *mental health*, and *housing*. Strategies and tactics within this plan reflect the community conditions that impact health with an emphasis on addressing differences in health outcomes for our most marginalized populations. Residents and stakeholders in the public and private sector developed this plan over the course of 17 months. Ultimately, the CHIP serves as a true community-centered approach to address the health, economic, racial, and social issues within Alexandria.

## Measuring Impact

The Alexandria Health Department (AHD) and the Partnership for Healthier Alexandria (PHA) are responsible for providing technical support, tracking and collecting data, and preparing the community progress report. The monitoring and evaluation team completed a bi-annual review process with two components:

- 1) Assessed barriers, action steps, and goals for each of the active CHIP tactics; and,
- 2) Leveraged partnerships and expertise within the community to provide technical assistance to tactic owners experiencing implementation barriers.

Every six months, the Monitoring and Evaluation Team will provide a community progress report with updates on strategy progress, opportunities to enhance, revise, or amplify tactics within the CHIP.

Report features:

- Spotlight of tactics making an impact
- Recently funded tactics that are in progress
- Key implementation challenges

For more information, including an appendix with tactic updates from the most recent monitoring period (8/2022-2/2023), visit [alexandriava.gov/health](http://alexandriava.gov/health).

## Get Involved!

Creating a healthier Alexandria requires a collective effort from all agencies, organizations, and residents. If you would like to get involved with one of the tactics highlighted in this report, contact [nathaniel.lewis@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:nathaniel.lewis@vdh.virginia.gov).

Review the [CHIP 2025](#) and see how much the report reflects the communities' priorities. If you would like to be involved in the next [Community Health Assessment](#), keep an eye out for updates on the next series of community conversations.

# CHIP PROGRESS SUMMARY

This summary provides an overview of tactic progress made within the CHIP.

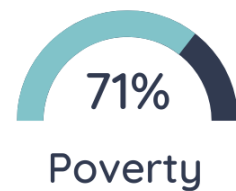
ACTION

80 TOTAL TACTICS

37 Programmatic  
36 Policy  
7 Both



Tactic Progress by Priority



The Monitoring and Evaluation Team assists each tactic owner and collects regular progress updates.

SUPPORT

Barriers

Solutions

Lack of Funding	Finding new funding sources
COVID-19 Pandemic	Rebuilding, rebranding, resilience
Turnover & Capacity	Finding new partnerships and existing staff strengths

64  
Guidance Engagements

36 were one-on-one interactions

The Monitoring and Evaluation team would like to thank the collective work of all tactic owners. These spotlights are an opportunity to see how just a few of the many tactics outlined in the CHIP are making a big difference in our community. The following spotlights cover the success related to one tactic per priority area to show the impact of this work:

# Poverty

DASH bus fares were made free in Fall 2021. Since then, there has been reduced financial burden for low income riders, historic ridership growth, and positive customer feedback.

OVER  
80%



of low-income riders say they are riding DASH more now because it is free.

122%  
INCREASE



in free DASH bus usage since before the COVID-19 pandemic, as of December 2022.

*\*Data provided by the DASH Inaugural Report*

"Free buses have changed my life! I am so portable again! I can go anywhere I want again and as much as I want."

-DASH Bus Rider

# Housing

Investments improved local capacity to support residents facing eviction. Residents were provided case management and legal assistance.

## Community Investments



15%

of defendants in Alexandria's General District Court received legal assistance through funding.

\$1.27  
MILLION



towards eviction prevention

\$1.8  
MILLION



towards community grants



Efforts led to a 30% decrease in average amount of unpaid rent.

*\*Data provided by the Eviction Prevention Task Force*

"Thank you City of Alexandria Eviction Prevention. [Staff] worked diligently along with Program ALIVE! in helping us avoid being homeless."

-Alexandria Resident

# Mental Health

Active learning resources and programs, including social, emotional, and academic learning activities improved student mental health.

**3,000+**  
STUDENTS



actively moving and learning



**719**

active seating pieces  
placed in 150 classrooms

**80+**



stationary bikes in ACPS and  
NoVA Detention Center Schools

*\*Data provided by Move2Learn*

"When I pedal, I can move but stay in my seat. I can learn better because I have something to do... It helps me stay focused and less distracted."

-Alexandria City High School Student

# PHA GRANT-FUNDED TACTICS

With the release of the plan, the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria immediately initiated an annual grants program to help advance the CHIP's priority areas, strategies, and tactics. Over the last two years, PHA has awarded \$52,500 to six nonprofits. Their work is described below.

## 2021 AWARDEES

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**AWARDEE: OFFENDER AID AND RESTORATION OF ARLINGTON, ALEXANDRIA, AND FALLS CHURCH (OAR).** THIS GRANTEE'S WORK FELL UNDER TWO DIFFERENT TACTICS WITHIN THE CHIP.

**Category:** Poverty

**Strategy:** Address disparities in the criminal justice system.

**Tactic:** Establish pathways to connect impacted community members to resources to promote a holistic integration back into the community.

**Category:** Mental Health

**Strategy:** Assure culturally appropriate and trauma informed mental health resources, services, and support for all Alexandria communities.

**Tactic:** Provide trauma-informed training to community groups.

### Activity Summary:

- OAR successfully used the funds to support 35 individuals through facilitating Health and Wellness, Employment, and Healthy Relationships courses in the William G. Truesdale Adult Detention Center and the Arlington County Detention Facility (where several Alexandrians are located) while incarcerated and post release.
- Launched a new Gender responsive program, designed to focus on the unique needs of those identifying as women, females, or femmes. This program supports those participants identifying as women, females, or femmes while incarcerated and post-release.

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**AWARDEE: MOVE2LEARN (RUNNINGBROOKE).** THIS GRANTEE'S WORK FELL UNDER FOUR DIFFERENT TACTICS WITHIN THE CHIP.

**Category:** Mental Health

**Strategy:** Assure culturally appropriate and trauma-informed mental health resources, services, and support for all Alexandria communities.

**Tactic:** Provide trauma-informed training to community groups.

**Category:** Mental Health

**Strategy:** Incorporate mental health strategies into the school day.

**Tactic:** Integrate Social, Emotional, and Academic Learning (SEAL) activities across many different types of programs and classrooms.



**Category:** Mental Health

**Strategy:** Incorporate mental health strategies into the school day.

**Tactic:** Invest in professional development so educators and support staff can learn how to incorporate Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) approaches into the school day.

**Category:** Mental Health

**Strategy:** Expand opportunities to free and low-cost physical activity.

**Tactic:** Partner with ACPS to sponsor monthly "walk the block" events for students, parents, staff, and community members.

### Activity Summary:

MOVE2LEARN:

- Provided professional development to 200 special educators (teachers and paraprofessionals); 160 school counselors; 200 ACPS leaders from central office.
- Developed three M2L SEAL lessons focused on teaching students the mind-body connection. M2L/RB Director of Programs taught two to three in-person lessons each to 20 different classrooms (approximately 500 students) at Samuel Tucker, Charles Barrett, ACHS Avid, and Cora Kelly.
- Organized Step Challenge at ACHS for Mental Health Awareness Month with school counselor and social worker to provide over 1200 high school students M2L lesson plans.
- Translated M2L Toolkit materials (fitness cubes and clocks) into Arabic, Amharic, and Spanish.
- Distributed 300 fitness cubes to families at PTA/PTAC community events at nearly every school in ACPS.
- Distributed 400 toolkits to ACPS teachers during professional development sessions and instructed them on how to integrate movement into their classrooms.

## 2022 AWARDEES

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**AWARDEE: CARPENTER'S SHELTER.** THIS GRANTEE'S WORK FELL UNDER ONE TACTIC WITHIN THE CHIP.

**Category:** Housing

**Strategy:** Build appropriate supports for those experiencing homelessness.

**Tactic:** Increase rapid re-housing to individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

### Activity Summary:

Funds will be used to reach Alexandrians who have the greatest barriers to permanent housing by funding special circumstances which could include:

- Required minimum rent, usually between \$25-50, for those with housing vouchers who have no income because of legal or mental health challenges,



- Amenity fees for recreation and mail services required by some apartment complexes in addition to rent, and
- Guarantor insurance to secure housing for clients whose housing application is initially denied.

The Carpenter’s Shelter anticipates serving 140 households with rapid re-housing funding. An in-house tracking tool, already in use for our existing rapid re-housing program, will be used to measure the impact of the supplemental rapid re-housing funding.

**AWARDEE: SPITFIRE CLUB.** THIS GRANTEE’S WORK FELL UNDER TWO DIFFERENT TACTICS WITHIN THE CHIP.

**Category:** Mental Health

**Strategy:** Incorporate mental health strategies into the school day.

**Tactic:** Streamline the youth mental services referral process.

**Category:** Mental Health

**Strategy:** Incorporate mental health strategies into the school day.

**Tactic:** Strengthen school and community-based education, outreach, and access around family mental health.

**Activity Summary:**

The Spitfire Club (TSC) seeks to pilot a model of integrating wraparound mental healthcare services into TSC’s core book club programming. The pilot program will consist of 1-2 cohorts of up to 30 girls in Title I schools, affordable housing communities, or community centers serving low-income neighborhoods. The program will consist of:

- Mobilizing a collaborative of mental healthcare providers to offer monthly small group therapy, screenings, and mental health triage during Spitfire’s regularly scheduled meetings.
- Partnering with mental healthcare providers to produce positive mental health tools, such as journals and classroom activities that can be utilized throughout the program.
- Engaging caregivers and youth service providers through outreach to support positive mental health in their respective environments. 2-3 mental health professionals (possibly therapists who are in the licensing process) will meet with the same group of girls monthly through the end of the school year during their regularly scheduled Spitfire Club time.

**AWARDEE: FRIENDS OF GUEST HOUSE.** THIS GRANTEE’S WORK FELL UNDER ONE TACTIC WITHIN THE CHIP.

**Category:** Poverty

**Strategy:** Address disparities in the criminal justice system.

**Tactic:** Establish pathways to connect impacted community members to resources to promote a holistic integration back into the community.

**Activity Summary:**

- Funding will be used to support Guest House’s efforts to successfully aid up to 300 returning female citizens reentering their communities. This effort will include a female-centered approach incorporating family reunification, self-esteem building, and healthy relationships. Case management will support navigating between social service agencies and community-based organizations.
- Friends of Guest House anticipates serving 300 women through residential aftercare and outreach programs; engaging 135 clients through a professional and emotional skills building program; and helping 36 reentering women graduate residential programming.

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**AWARDEE: SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY GROUP.** THIS GRANTEE’S WORK FELL UNDER ONE TACTIC WITHIN THE CHIP.

**Category:** Poverty

**Strategy:** Increase access to employment resources and opportunities.

**Tactic:** Support the City project to collect and map minority and immigrant businesses to strengthen existing businesses and encourage new businesses.

**Activity Summary:**

- Funding will be used to bring visibility, viability, and sustainability to African American businesses that are marginalized through systemic processes that remove them from gaining financial assistance such as loans (federal and state) and local funding sources, and other resources to help them to become and/or remain sustainable.
- This effort will focus on collaborating with National Black Business Month and will promote African American business throughout the year through various efforts. The intended results include more stable communities, more opportunities, property ownership, credit building, and generational wealth.

## BARRIERS

The main obstacles that tactic owners reported during this monitoring and evaluation period were:

- Funding limitations
- Navigating the pandemic
- Staff transitions and limited capacity

The pandemic presented several hardships and challenges for our community. While working to address CHIP priority areas, our tactic owners are also responding to immediate and ever-changing emergency needs of our residents.

Therefore, several CHIP tactics experienced delays in coordination and implementation. For some, these issues were magnified by funding limitations and staff transitions resulting in limited capacity to readily fulfill each of our CHIP priorities. In response to these challenges, tactic owners reassessed their capacity to meet deadlines and deliver intended objectives. As a result, tactic owners were able to identify other sources of funding, foster collaboration with other key stakeholders, and develop more feasible timelines as needed. Other tactic owners were able to identify areas to improve their capacity internally through efforts such as filling vacant positions, prioritizing organizational activities, and leveraging existing expertise.

The resilience demonstrated by our tactic owners is reflective of their commitment to our community and each of our residents. The priority areas outlined within the CHIP already align closely with the needs created by the pandemic and will require an even more active role from our community as we continue to build a healthier Alexandria.

## MONITORING & EVALUATION

The Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria and the Alexandria Health Department are responsible for monitoring the Community Health Improvement Plan through 2025. This concerted effort provides technical support to each tactic owner and collects regular progress updates.

### Monitoring and Evaluation Team Objectives



#### Unity

Encourage and support collaborative efforts amongst collaborators on each tactic.



#### Accountability

Encourage each tactic owner to establish clearly defined roles (reporting, data collection, etc.).



#### Transparency

Encourage consistent data review, information sharing, and continual communication.



#### Technical Assistance

Provide support to tactic owners that may be facing barriers to implementation.



#### Awareness

Convey results to community members in a clear and concise manner.

# Changing Lives Together

The CHIP is a result of meaningful and sustained partnerships within the community. These collaborations provide opportunities for collective action and establishing direct pathways to resources that are essential to the long-term health of every resident. The monitoring and evaluation team is thankful to all the members of the Alexandria community that have contributed to the development and implementation of this plan.

## Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria Steering Committee Members

- Allen Lomax, Chair, Community Member
- Jim Scott, Vice Chair, President, Applied Policy
- Joanne Broderick, Alexandria Commission on Aging Representative
- Marion Brunken, Executive Director, Volunteer Alexandria
- Deron Campbell, Director, Community Relations, Population and Community Health Services, Inova Health System
- Jane Collins, Executive Director, Heard
- Jim Durham, Alexandria Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee Representative
- Jim Epstein, Board of Trustees, Frank and Betty Wright Foundation
- Jeanine Finch, Director, Government Affairs, CareFirst Blue Cross Blue Shield
- Laurie Flynn, Community Member, Former Executive Director, NAMI
- Karen Seaver Hill, Community Member and Health Expert
- Diana Karczmarczyk, Ph.D, Public Health Educator, Author
- Dr. Basim Khan, Executive Director, Neighborhood Health
- Jane Knops, Director, Community Partnerships and Communications, Neighborhood Health
- Rachel Lynch, Program Director, Northern Virginia Health Foundation
- JeanAnn Mayhan, Principal, Mayhan Associates – Researchers for HealthCare, Alexandria Medical Reserve Corps
- Helen Morris, Chair, Alexandria Campaign on Adolescent Pregnancy
- Col. Jim Paige (Retired), Executive Director, Concerned Citizens Network of Alexandria
- Melissa Poretz Riddy, Director, Eastern Region, Government and Community Relations, Inova Alexandria Hospital
- John Porter, Educator, Former President and CEO of ACT for Alexandria
- Stacey Swartz, Co-Owner and Pharmacist in Charge, The Neighborhood Pharmacy of Del Ray
- Aisha Salzar, Associate Extension Agent, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech

## Ex-Officio Members

- Kara Blanker, Philanthropic Advisor, Frank and Betty Wright Foundation
- Chelsea Eickert, Coordinator, Alexandria Children and Youth Community Plan, Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services
- Kate Garvey, Director, Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services
- Nathaniel Lewis, Public Health Planner, Alexandria Health Department
- Natalie Talis, Population Health Manager, Alexandria Health Department
- Lisette Torres, Coordinator, Alexandria Campaign on Adolescent Pregnancy
- Lina Zimmerman, Population Health Epidemiologist, Alexandria Health Department

## Tactic Owners

ACPS Industry Advisory Boards	Alexandria Housing Development Corporation	Department of Community and Human Services
ACT for Alexandria	Alexandria Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court Services Unit	Dream Project
Alex Teens	Alexandria Libraries	Early Childhood Division
Alexandria Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee	Alexandria Opioid Work Group	Economic Opportunities Commission
Alexandria Chamber of Commerce	Alexandria Police Department	Educational Opportunities for Alexandrians
Alexandria City High School Academy of Finance	Alexandria Public Health Advisory Commission	Ethiopian Community Development Council, Inc
Alexandria City Public Schools	Alexandria Redevelopment Housing Authority	Friends of Guest House
Alexandria City Public Schools Career and Technical Education Advisory Committee	Alexandria Small Business Development Center	Friends of the Alexandria Mental Health Center
Alexandria Commission on Information Technology	Alexandria Transportation Commission	George Mason University Center for Psychological Services
Alexandria Community Services Board	Alexandria Workforce Development Center	Grassroots Alexandria
Alexandria Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Activities	Animal Welfare League of Alexandria	Hunger Free Alexandria
Alexandria Department of Transportation and Environmental Services	AVID	Inova Health System
Alexandria Economic Opportunities Commission	Carpenters' Union	NAMI Northern Virginia
Alexandria Employment Commission	Children, Youth and Families Collaborative Commission	Neighborhood Health
Alexandria Eviction Prevention Partnership	Children and Youth Community Plan Prevention Work Group	Northern Virginia Community College
Alexandria Eviction Prevention Task Force	Commission on Women	Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance
Alexandria Families for Safe Streets	Computer CORE	Office of Housing
Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Committee	Del Ray Business Association	Office of Planning and Zoning

## Tactic Owners (Cont.)

Old Town Business Association	Running Brooke	Virginia Cooperative Extension
Partnership for a Healthier ID	Senior Services of Alexandria	Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy
Alexandria Steering Committee	Kids First Years (formerly Smart Beginnings Alexandria)	Virginia Theological Seminary
Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness	Smart Beginnings Alexandria	Volunteer America
Project Discovery	Social Responsibility Group	West End Business Association
Project ID	Social Services Advisory Board	Youth Development Team
Public Health Advisory Commission	Tenants and Workers United	
RAISE	Urban Alliance	

For more information, including an appendix with tactic updates from the most recent monitoring period (8/2022-2/2023), visit [alexandriava.gov/health](https://alexandriava.gov/health).