

HOME-ARP Allocation Plan

Participating Jurisdiction: City of Topeka, Kansas

Date: 4-5-22

Consultation

Before developing its plan, a PJ must consult with the CoC(s) serving the jurisdiction’s geographic area, homeless and domestic violence service providers, veterans’ groups, public housing agencies (PHAs), public agencies that address the needs of the qualifying populations, and public or private organizations that address fair housing, civil rights, and the needs of persons with disabilities, at a minimum. State PJs are not required to consult with every PHA or CoC within the state’s boundaries; however, local PJs must consult with all PHAs (including statewide or regional PHAs) and CoCs serving the jurisdiction.

Summarize the consultation process:

Development Strategies (DS) coordinated with the Housing Services Division to attend (virtually) the January 17 City of Topeka Housing Task force meeting to describe the HOME-ARP consultation and allocation plan process and discuss needs and gaps. DS then followed up via email with homeless service, housing, and related organizations to conduct one-on-one consultations via videoconference (Zoom or Microsoft Teams). Consultations were held between January 27th and February 18, 2022.

The City of Topeka Housing Services Division solicited input via email from Continuum of Care and Citizen Advisory Council partners after receiving the HOME-ARP grant. Several recommendations about priorities for the use of HOME-ARP funds were received and are also reflected in the allocation plan.

List the organizations consulted, and summarize the feedback received from these entities.

Agency/Org Consulted	Type of Agency/Org	Method of Consultation	Feedback
Topeka Housing Authority	Organization for fair housing	Phone, Trey George, President/CEO Friday, April 1 at 2:30pm	Identified having quality housing units, particularly one-bedroom units, available as a major need, evidenced by public housing waiting list of 195 names (162 are for one-bedroom units). Services that help those with mental health challenges would help with housing stability, as well as services that help with utility payments and basic housecleaning practices.
Supportive Services for Veteran Families	Veterans Group Housing	Zoom Conference Benton, Alissa February 10, 2022	Identified supportive services for behavioral health, affordable rental

The Salvation Army		11:00 A.M.	housing, number of case managers as top priority.
City of Topeka	Continuum of Care (CoC)	Zoom Conference Carrillo, Stephanie Lopez-Foster, Hilery January 28, 2022 10:00 A.M.	Identified emergency shelters, transitional housing, affordable housing units as top priority, followed by services for education on domestic violence/human trafficking. Provided data included in this plan.
Valeo Behavioral Health Care	Homeless Service Provider	Zoom Conference Douthart, Teresa February 8, 2022 2:00 P.M.	Identified emergency shelters, specifically shelter plus care as top priority, followed by affordable housing, not enough landlords who accept vouchers.
Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)	Domestic Violence Women Shelter	Zoom Conference Marker, Kathleen Spielman, Becca February 17, 2022 3:30 P.M. Email to City as well.	Identified emergency shelters, transitional housing as top priority, followed by mental health services, legal services for victims of crimes, assistance with long term support services. Added that when housing is not available to this population, they often have no choice but to return to their abuser. The YWCA has the need to purchase property to house homeless individuals who are victims and survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking.
Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)	Domestic Violence Women Shelter	Marker, Allison Email to City	Prioritized increase in emergency housing options for victims/survivors of domestic abuse. The need for funds to purchase property to house victims/survivors. An increased amount of beds would enhance the capacity for more individuals and families. It would allow those staying longer to have tremendous success in gaining independence.
Citizen, Representing YWCA	Domestic Violence Women Shelter	Williams, Megan Email to City YWCA Board Member	Board member of the YWCA for five years. The services the YWCA provides to the community are necessary, and unfortunately, the need is increasing. Responsibility as leaders within the community is to dedicate ourselves to preventing and solving homelessness in Shawnee County; this can be accomplished

			with the increase in emergency housing.
Citizen, Representing YWCA	Domestic Violence Women Shelter	Sester, Kaityln Email to City	Wants funds to allow YWCA to purchase to housing facilities for domestic abuse victims/survivors; every individual has a right to feel safe in their home.
Valley Park Neighborhood Improvement Association, Citizen Advisory Council	Organization for Valley Park	McClacherty, Susan Citizen Council Chair	Wants to see staff create a project plan which enables all providers to submit proposals. The project plan should include several deliverables, such as the Communication Plan. There are some concerns about local organizations having the skill set to manage a large construction project and the means to continue funds for the future. Advocates for funds to support services to empower and rebuild low to moderate-income victims of domestic violence.
Housing and Credit Counseling Inc.	Organization for fair housing	Zoom Conference Panecati, Abigail January 28, 2022 2:30 P.M.	Identified education resources for tenants and landlords, affordable housing, second chance tenant programs as top priority, followed by accommodations for housing and supported services.
Veterans Administration	Veterans Group	Zoom Conference Rose, Kathleen February 11, 2022 11:00 A.M.	Identified the need in staffing for mental health services as top priority, followed by the need for more case managers, variety of shelters to serve families and veterans with animals
SENT Topeka, Fellowship Hi-Crest	Organization for fair housing	Zoom Conference Sublet, Jonathan January 28, 2022 3:00 P.M. Email to City as well.	Identified the need for more emergency shelters and affordable housing as top priority, followed by supported resources and services. The need for quality rental units for those within the 80% or below LMI category so that the available housing voucher funds could be used.
Homeless Task Force	Housing Services	Zoom Conference Board Members January 12, 2022 1:00 P.M.	Community-wide commitment to the goal of ending homeless population Services: emergency services, supportive services, transitional housing units.
Topeka Youth Project	Service Provider	See Homeless Task Force–This	A local organization that works to help young people to stay out of

		organization was present	trouble by providing them opportunities around the community
United Way of Greater Topeka	Service Provider	See Homeless Task Force–This organization was present	Invests in Jackson, Jefferson, and Shawnee counties to assist with the basic needs of the most vulnerable populations. The basic needs include food, rent and utilities, protection from Domestic Violence, health care, and assistance with prescriptions.
Doorstep Inc.	Homeless Service Provider	See Homeless Task Force–This organization was present	Provides short-term emergency aid to individuals in need and provides resources to promote long-term sufficiency
Community Action	Service Provider	See Homeless Task Force–This organization was present	Offers numerous services, including early childhood education, rental housing, help with basic needs
Catholic Charities	Homeless Service Provider	See Homeless Task Force–This organization was present	Provides emergency assistance to those of low income, poor, immigrants, single moms, and among others
Cornerstone of Topeka	Homeless Service Provider	See Homeless Task Force–This organization was present	Provides short-term transitional housing to individuals and families experiencing homelessness.
Impact Avenues	Homeless Service Provider	Zoom Conference Carrillo, Stephanie Lopez-Foster, Hilery January 28, 2022 10:00 A.M.	Helps students get the resources and opportunities they need to get a quality education and not worry about where they will sleep at night
Topeka Rescue Mission	Homeless Service Provider	Zoom Conference Feaker, Barry (Executive Director) March 9, 2022, 11:30 AM	Provides emergency shelter, various homeless services, education, job training, assistance finding housing, food, and other services. Cited supported housing units and major need.
Cornerstone of Topeka	Housing Services	Palmer, Christopher	Provided the following recommendation for funding: <i>Affordable Housing-</i> \$864,160 for gap financing for affordable housing development <i>Tenant Based Rental Assistance-</i> \$200,000 to enhance the Shelter + Care Program

			<i>Supportive Services-</i> \$200,000 for Valeo or another agency to either to prevent homelessness <i>Non-Congregate Shelter-</i> \$800,000 for Topeka Rescue Mission/Valeo
North Topeka West Neighborhood Improvement Association, Citizen Advisory Council	Organization for Fair Housing	Pederzani, Laura Citizen Advisory Council Member	Supports the following priorities in this order for the Amended Con Plan: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Non-congregate Shelter for YWCA 2) Tenant-Based Rental Assistance 3) Supportive Services 4) Affordable Rental Housing Any resources not exhausted should be used for additional supportive services.

If additional space is needed, insert image of table here:

Public Participation

PJs must provide for and encourage citizen participation in the development of the HOME-ARP allocation plan. Before submission of the plan, PJs must provide residents with reasonable notice and an opportunity to comment on the proposed HOME-ARP allocation plan of **no less than 15 calendar days**. The PJ must follow its adopted requirements for “reasonable notice and an opportunity to comment” for plan amendments in its current citizen participation plan. In addition, PJs must hold **at least one public hearing** during the development of the HOME-ARP allocation plan and prior to submission.

For the purposes of HOME-ARP, PJs are required to make the following information available to the public:

- The amount of HOME-ARP the PJ will receive,
- The range of activities the PJ may undertake.

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:

- *Public comment period: start date – April 5, 2022. end date –April 20, 2022.*
- *Public hearing: May 10, 2022.*

The Consultant Development Strategies performed the Home Study for the City of Topeka and was contracted to meet with all agencies and compile all public comments and presented the results of the Amended 2021 Consolidated Action Plan to the City Council on May 10, 2022 with recommendations for funding for the HOME-ARP Grant.

Describe any efforts to broaden public participation:

The Consultant Development Strategies was used to broaden public participation and met with all public agencies listed to obtain public comments.

A PJ must consider any comments or views of residents received in writing, or orally at a public hearing, when preparing the HOME-ARP allocation plan.

Summarize the comments and recommendations received through the public participation process:

- Several individuals recommend funds to support services to purchase additional housing for victims of domestic violence.
- Some organizations recommended funds to be used towards additional mental health services.
- Several individuals recommend funds for other emergency shelters and shelter plus care for qualification population.
- Individuals expressed that the funds to be available for different transitional shelters
- Some individuals said funds should be used for additional affordable housing for qualifying populations.
- Several individuals recommend funds to support education programs for tenants and landlords.
- Several individuals expressed that some of the funds to be used towards supportive services.
- One individual recommended the following distribution of funds: \$864,160 for affordable housing, \$200,000 for tenant-based rental assistance, \$200,000 for supportive services, and \$800,000 for non-congregate shelter.

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

All comments were received and compiled by Development Strategies and recommendations were made by Development Strategies based on comments received.

Needs Assessment and Gaps Analysis

PJs must evaluate the size and demographic composition of qualifying populations within its boundaries and assess the unmet needs of those populations. In addition, a PJ must identify any gaps within its current shelter and housing inventory as well as the service delivery system. A PJ should use current data, including point in time count, housing inventory count, or other data available through CoCs, and consultations with service providers to quantify the individuals and families in the qualifying populations and their need for additional housing, shelter, or services.

The PJ may use the optional tables provided below and/or attach additional data tables to this template.

OPTIONAL Homeless Needs Inventory and Gap Analysis Table

Homeless													
	Current Inventory					Homeless Population				Gap Analysis			
	Family		Adults Only		Vets	Family HH (at least 1 child)	Adult HH (w/o child)	Vets	Victims of DV	Family		Adults Only	
	# of Beds	# of Units	# of Beds	# of Units	# of Beds					# of Beds	# of Units	# of Beds	# of Units
Emergency Shelter	50		198		20								
Transitional Housing	26		4										
Permanent Supportive Housing	195		123		0								
Other Permanent Housing						0	0	0	0				
Sheltered Homeless						38	158	9	30				
Unsheltered Homeless						4	99	7	101				
<i>Current Gap</i>										40	20	45	30

Suggested Data Sources: 1. Point in Time Count (PIT); 2. Continuum of Care Housing Inventory Count (HIC); 3. Consultation

OPTIONAL Housing Needs Inventory and Gap Analysis Table

Non-Homeless			
	Current Inventory	Level of Need	Gap Analysis
	# of Units	# of Households	# of Households
Total Rental Units	23,155		
Rental Units Affordable to HH at 30% AMI (At-Risk of Homelessness)	2,280		
Rental Units Affordable to HH at 50% AMI (Other Populations)	6,750		
0%-30% AMI Renter HH w/ 1 or more severe housing problems (At-Risk of Homelessness)		4,400	
30%-50% AMI Renter HH w/ 1 or more severe housing problems (Other Populations)		3,275	
<i>Current Gaps</i>			400-500

Suggested Data Sources: 1. American Community Survey (ACS); 2. Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS)

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

The 2021 Point-in-Time Count indicated that there were 446 sheltered and unsheltered homeless individuals in Topeka on the day that was conducted. The City’s HMIS database indicates that nearly 1,900 unique individuals were served by the partner agencies in the city in 2021. The demographics of those served are summarized in the following table:

SUMMARY OF SERVICES PROVIDED IN 2021: QUALIFYING POPULATIONS, CITY OF TOPEKA		
Categories	Unduplicated Counts	% of total
Race		
American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous	70	4%
Asian or Asian American	3	0%
Black, African American, or African	380	20%
Client doesn't know	8	0%
Client refused	18	1%
Data not collected	11	1%
Multi-Racial	99	5%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	13	1%
White	1,078	58%
Ethnicity		
Client doesn't know	13	1%
Client refused	20	1%
Data not collected	34	2%
Hispanic/Latin(a)(o)(x)	193	10%
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latin(a)(o)(x)	1,610	87%
Gender		
Data not collected	2	0%
Female	861	46%
Male	990	53%
Multiple-Genders	6	0%
Age Range		
0	1	0%
0-17	374	20%
18-45	839	45%
46-62	568	31%
> 63	77	4%
Total Unduplicated Individuals Served	1,859	

Source: City of Topeka HMIS Database

Describe the unmet housing and service needs of qualifying populations, including but not limited to:

- **Sheltered and unsheltered homeless populations**
There are currently not enough emergency shelter beds, particularly non-congregate shelter space, for all populations, especially for women and children fleeing domestic violence. There are not enough transitional housing units, supportive housing units, or affordable housing units for homeless individuals and families. There is a need for additional staffing for long-term case management, social work, and similar positions.
- **Those currently housed populations at risk of homelessness**
Those currently housed but at risk of homelessness lack access to tenant-landlord mediation that could resolve potential eviction situations. There is a lack of good quality

affordable housing for individuals and families to move to when there is an unstable housing situation. There are limited resources for deposits, or temporary rental assistance.

- ***Other families requiring services or housing assistance or to prevent homelessness***
Other families requiring services for housing assistance to prevent homelessness face many similar challenges, including access to counseling or services that help guide through the situation, financial resources to cover back rent or other financial challenges, and similar challenges. There is not adequate affordable housing, particularly landlords who will accept applications from those who are justice involved, had prior evictions, or other challenges.
- ***Those at greatest risk of housing instability or in unstable housing situations***
In addition to the needs noted above, those at greatest risk are often highly cost burdened and live in housing that is in poor condition. They often have low-paying jobs, or have difficulty finding/affording transportation to work. Some lack the needed skills, or even clothes, to find work that improves financial security and lessens housing instability.

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:

Emergency Shelters and Transitional Housing

There is a robust network of homeless service providers in Topeka who work to meet the needs of those experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of homelessness. The City participates in the local Homeless Task Force group, which meets monthly to expand understanding of the services needed by those experiencing homelessness, facilitate consolidation and coordination of homeless services, and improve service delivery.

The **Topeka Rescue Mission (TRM)** includes a men’s shelter, women’s shelter, and family shelter and is the primary emergency shelter provider in Topeka. Overall, there are 150 beds for families and single persons. There are an additional 136 upper bunks with a total of 286 beds between the facilities. Occupant was limited during COVID do allow for social distancing and will there are no plans to increase occupancy to pre-COVID levels. At times, due to family demographics or a guest’s physical limitations, not all bunks can be utilized. The Topeka Rescue Mission each year shelters approximately 2,000 individuals (including duplicates). The goal of Topeka Rescue Mission is to decrease the likelihood of people who enter their facilities from geographic “hot spots”, which are Shawnee, Wabaunsee, Jefferson, Jackson, and Osage counties.

The YWCA Northeast Kansas is the primary provider of emergency/transitional housing and supportive services for domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking victims. The YWCA Northeast Kansas can house 19 women and children at one time, and the YWCA has a second undisclosed location comprised of 9 units in an apartment complex. The latter facility is currently leased and the organization is seeking funding to maintain those units in the current facility, or another building that meets the needs of this population. The YWCA Northeast Kansas reported that from January 2019 to December 2020, the organization provided 652 victims fleeing domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking with more than 11,178 shelter nights. In addition to housing assistance, victims may require financial

assistance for basic needs, legal aid, counseling, and training/education to assist with employment.

The Cornerstone of Topeka, Inc. provides short-term transitional housing to individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Cornerstone Inc. currently has 179 housing units consisting of single-family homes, duplexes, and a few fourplexes. There are 23 units providing housing to the homeless population at a low rent with all utilities paid. It is the intention for the household to secure permanent housing by the end of the six months. Application to the program is by referral from a local service agency working with the home and can verify homelessness. The social service agencies are Topeka Rescue Mission, public schools, churches, hospital social workers, Family Resource Center, TARC, Let's Help, DCF, Valeo, and others.

Supportive Services and Outreach

Valeo Behavioral Health Care is a Shelter Plus Care participating agency. They provide housing assistance to individuals in Shawnee County who have a severe persistent mental illness and dual diagnosis with substance abuse and lack a regular adequate nighttime residence. Valeo provides transitional housing services for consumers discharged from Osawatomie State Hospital and Nursing Facilities for Mental Health.

Homeless Task Force comprises local government entities, social service agencies, medical and mental health providers. This organization is advocacy, information sharing, coordination, and program development devoted to preventing and solving homelessness in Shawnee County, Kansas. One of the most important activities is the annual count of the homeless population and a yearly enumeration of emergency services, supportive services, transitional housing units, and beds that make up the homeless assistance systems.

The Salvation Army Topeka is a branch office of the Christian non-profit Salvation Army whose mission is aiding the poor and people in need. The Salvation Army offers human services through programs, including disaster relief, public emergency services, and veteran services. The Salvation Army provides the community with a meal program and community resources for the qualifying population. The Salvation Army offers social services, including food pantry access, rent and utility assistance, prescriptions, eye exams, and clothing vouchers.

Housing and Credit Counseling, Inc., assists the community by helping consumers achieve housing and financial goals. Housing and Credit Counseling Inc assists tenants in resolving related difficulties with dignity. Housing and Credit Counseling Inc services are approved by HUD and regulated by the Office of the State Bank Commissioner. Housing and Credit Counseling Inc is a local trusted resource for budgeting, credit building and reports, debt management, student loan repayment, mortgage default, and bankruptcy counseling/education. Housing and Credit Counseling Inc provides training and education which covers a range of topics related to homeownership, renting, finances, and credit.

Veterans Administration of Topeka has contracted with RoseVilla to provide supportive services to homeless veterans. The goal of the Veterans Affairs of Topeka is to rapidly stabilize Veteran's medical, mental health, substance abuse, and other psycho-social problems to place Veterans in an appropriate transitional or permanent housing. The goal is to place the Veteran into housing within 60 to 90 days, with no more than 180 days without a planned reason for an extension. RoseVilla provides supportive services to Veterans to encourage independent living in a home-like setting. The following core services are provided: housing, meal preparation, cleaning, medication, monitoring, transportation, and activities. RoseVilla owns a refinished three-story house home to 40 residents in downtown Topeka.

SENT Topeka is committed to the revitalization and the redevelopment of the communities in Topeka. This mission will be achieved through economic and housing developments. SENT plans to purchase and repair homes in the Hi-Crest Neighborhood, providing resident jobs and helping families with housing through renting or ownership. SENT believes that part of a community transformation is addressing mental health and emotional needs. SENT offers mental health counseling from a licensed professional with training in depression, PTSD, sexual abuse, anxiety, domestic violence, and trauma.

Topeka Youth Project is a local organization that works to help young people to stay out of trouble by providing them opportunities around the community. The Topeka Youth Project has provided more than 75,000 hours of community service to Capital City and Shawnee County. The organization consists of two programs for people to choose from: the Jobs For Young Adults and Youth Court.

United Way of Greater Topeka brings together people, companies, and nonprofits to create positive change in the community. United Way of Greater Topeka is committed to the education, financial stability, and health of the community. United Way of Greater Topeka invests in Jackson, Jefferson, and Shawnee counties to assist with the basic needs of the most vulnerable populations. The basic needs include food, rent and utilities, protection from Domestic Violence, health care, and assistance with prescriptions.

Doorstep, Inc. provides short-term emergency aid to individuals in need and provides resources to promote long-term sufficiency. Doorstep Inc. provides the most vulnerable populations with food, clothing, rent, transportation (local gas vouchers/bus tickets), prescriptions, and utilities. Doorstep's upfront emergency services are for those who need immediate assistance with critical needs while they wait for additional aid.

Community Action Partnership offers numerous services, including early childhood education, rental housing, and help with basic needs. Community Action offers Head Start and Early Start for children in the community. Community Action rental housing provides quality, safe, and affordable housing to families with lower incomes. The rental housing includes single-family homes, duplexes, and apartments. Community Action operates a permanent supportive housing project with partnerships with Valeo Behavioral Health Care. Community Action assists homeless individuals with a rapid re-housing program. This program can help with payment of first-month rent, security deposit, utility deposit(s), and certain utility arrears payments. If homelessness has been caused by COVID-related circumstances, Community Action may be able to help with up to six months of rent.

Catholic Charities of Topeka provides emergency assistance to those of low income, poor, immigrants, single moms, and others. Housing assistance involving homeless prevention, rehousing, budgeting, and financial aid is part of the emergency services provided. The Catholic Charities comprises several churches in the Shawnee County area. The clients in the Catholic Charities can get free food, basic needs, clothing, vouchers for gasoline, medications, and other assistance.

Impact Avenues helps homeless students in Topeka and Shawnee County. Impact Avenues will help students get the resources and opportunities they need to get a quality education and not worry about where they will sleep at night. Impact Avenues uses a collective impact which is a model that removes barriers in order to accomplish goals, reduces duplication of efforts in the community, and collects data to measure success. When admitted to the program, children and their families will be given support to obtain stable housing, transportation, employment, financial literacy, healthcare, and other services.

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

The following gaps were identified through the consultations and data analysis.

Shelter Inventory: As listed in the *Homeless Needs Inventory and Gap Analysis Table*, there are a total of 268 emergency shelter beds in the City of Topeka—50 for families, 198 for adults, and 20 for veterans. However, occupancy for these beds was reduced during the pandemic for health and safety purposes and the primary organization that operates them does not think it will increase occupancy to pre-COVID levels. The agencies represented in the consultations indicated that, overall, there are not enough shelter beds, particularly for women and families, and those who need an unlisted location because they are fleeing domestic violence or a similar dangerous situation.

The most recent Point-in-Time Count (2021) found 446 total homeless individuals—211 unsheltered and 235 sheltered. Of note, nearly half (101) of the unsheltered homeless individuals reported being victims of domestic violence. YWCA is the primary provider of shelter beds and units for this population and they have capacity for approximately 30 individuals at one time, depending on the specific circumstances.

There are gaps in the current shelter inventory. As noted, there are not enough beds or units for victims of domestic violence, and there is a risk that 9 units for victims of domestic violence will be lost due to funding limitations. Based on the consultations with YWCA and other agencies, an additional 20 to 30 shelter beds and/or units are needed.

Due to COVID restrictions (e.g., occupancy reductions to limit exposure in congregate shelters) and other program requirements, almost every agency consulted reported that individuals are being turned away from emergency shelters. The point-in-time count indicated 257 total homeless adults, with 158 being sheltered, while 198 shelter beds are available. Based on this, 40 beds may have been available for 99 unsheltered individuals. Thus, assuming the point-in-time count is generally representative of the homeless population, there is a need for 50 to 60 additional shelter beds.

Overall, there is a need for 70 to 100 additional shelter beds. Another challenge is that most shelter beds are in congregate facilities. While congregate facilities are not an eligible use of HOME-ARP funds, agencies consulted indicated that there is a need for emergency shelter facilities with private rooms (i.e., non-congregate emergency shelter beds/units). If funded, such units could also be used for transitional housing.

Housing Inventory: The most prevalent theme that came out of the consultations is that Topeka does not have enough affordable housing units—transitional housing, supportive housing, or housing for low-income individuals (homeless or otherwise). This was also a key theme of the 2020 *Citywide Housing Market Study and Strategy* (“2020 Housing Study”), which concluded that there will be demand for approximately 2,800 new affordable (at up to 60% AMI) rental units over the next 20 years. Of these, more than 1,000 need to be affordable at or below 30 percent of AMI and approximately 1,000 need to be affordable for those making 30 percent to 50 percent of AMI.

There is also a substantial housing quality challenge that particularly impacts housing access for homeless, sheltered homeless, and households considered to be in unstable housing situations. The *Housing Needs Inventory and Gaps Analysis Table* shows that 4,550 households are at risk of being homeless (30% AMI with at least one severe housing problem) and the 2020 Housing Study identified a supply of only 2,280 rental housing units that are affordable to this income cohort.

Anecdotally, those interviewed for the consultations indicated that it can be difficult to find housing units that are suitable for their clients, particularly if they are/were justice involved or have an eviction on record.

Thus, there is substantial need for additional affordable housing for those at-risk of homelessness (up to 30% AMI) and other populations (30% to 50% AMI)—more than 2,000 rental units over the next 20 years, and approximately 400 to 500 units currently, according to the 2020 Housing Study.

According to the Continuum of Care Housing Inventory Count, there are 30 transitional housing units and 318 permanent supportive housing units in Topeka. Nearly every provider we consulted indicated that the existing supply is not sufficient for the current needs. In particular, transitional housing paired with services for a one-month to six-month stay is needed to help homeless individuals and families prepare for permanent supportive housing, and other housing in the open market. There is a need to at least double the number of transitional housing units—for 30 to 50 additional units. It is important to preserve and add units for specific populations, including victims of domestic violence or trafficking, those with mental health challenges, and veterans, as well as single men and women.

Topeka Housing Authority (THA) operates nine public housing developments with 744 total units, ranging from studios to five-bedroom units. They also administer nearly 1,000 Housing Choice Vouchers, for which the waiting list is closed and has nearly 500 names. The public housing wait list has 195 names, and 162 are waiting for one-bedroom units. THA typically maintains 95 to 100 percent occupancy for public housing units, meaning there are few units available at any given time. According to the 2020 annual report, 58 percent of public housing residents and 55 percent of voucher recipients are single-person households, indicating a strong need for one-bedroom units. Slightly more than 10 percent of residents and voucher holders are seniors 62 and older.

It should also be noted that YWCA housed numerous individuals in hotel rooms during 2021 because of the lack of suitable housing units, and the critical need for shelter during COVID.

Service Delivery System: Overall, the City of Topeka has a robust service delivery system for qualifying populations, including services designed to meet the unique needs of veterans, victims of domestic abuse, victims of trafficking, those with mental and physical health challenges, and the general homeless population. Services offered include:

- Case management;
- Mental health counseling;

- Healthcare;
- Credit counseling;
- Rental assistance;
- Education services;
- Transportation vouchers;
- Substance abuse programs;
- Employment training;
- Mobile shower;
- Regular outreach;
- Meals and clothing;
- Legal aid; and,
- Additional services.

According to the service providers consulted, the greatest limitation on providing the services that qualifying populations need is the resources and funding available to provide those services. Thus, the most substantial gap in the service delivery system is adequate staffing to provide the level of case management and support that is needed to address the many challenges that the qualifying populations face.

Identify the characteristics of housing associated with instability and an increased risk of homelessness if the PJ will include such conditions in its definition of “other populations” as established in the HOME-ARP Notice:

The characteristics of housing associated with instability and increased risk of homelessness include:

- Severe housing cost burden (22 percent of renter households are severely cost burdened);
- Presence of other severe housing problems;
- General poor housing conditions (i.e., peeling paint, older systems, broken windows, etc.);
- Locations in parts of Topeka with below average neighborhood conditions, indirect access to jobs and services, and high poverty rates;
- Higher likelihood of poor property management/landlord practices; and,
- General lack of access to “quality” affordable housing units.

Identify priority needs for qualifying populations:

The priority needs are identified through consultations following HUD guidelines. The main priorities identified include:

- Non-congregate shelter units, particularly for victims of domestic violence;
- Affordable rental housing, including transitional and permanent supportive housing;
- Placement of more beds in existing emergency shelter services such as Topeka Rescue Mission and YWCA;
- Services for special populations, including trauma-informed services;
- Landlord-tenant liaison services;
- Expanded case management;
- Expanded mental health services;
- Outpatient services/substance abuse treatment services;

- Financial assistance to secure stable housing, rental application fees, security and utility deposits, and first/last month's rent;
- Transportation- gasoline vouchers, bus passes; and,
- Education services.

These represent the key items that all or most of the providers cited during the consultations.

Explain how the level of need and gaps in its shelter and housing inventory and service delivery systems based on the data presented in the plan were determined:

The gaps in services and programs need to provide affordable housing, transitional housing, emergency shelters, and supportive services to qualifying populations. The data was collected by the most recent Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data, Continuum of Care Housing Inventory Count (HIC), personal consultation with community providers, 2021 point-in-time count, *2020 Citywide Housing Market Study and Strategy*, and Health Management Information Systems (HMIS). Furthermore, supportive services, case management, and mental health are a priority to achieve housing stability within the qualifying populations.

For households that are currently housed but have many challenges maintaining their home, the level of need was measured by that amount of affordable, safe, and satisfactory living conditions, as well as the number of renter households that are experiencing severe housing cost burdens. The families need assistance to stay housed without becoming burdened by the cost of their home. The consultations helped to confirm the needs and gaps identified through the various data sources, and helped to prioritize the needs.

Overall, the most substantial need that was identified through the consultations and needs and gap analysis is for more housing units for homelessness individuals and families, either in the form of non-congregate shelter beds/units or affordable housing units (transitional and/or permanent supportive housing). These needs were particularly exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, as housing with adequate space for social distancing became very short in supply due to occupancy restrictions.

HOME-ARP Activities

Describe the method for soliciting applications for funding and/or selecting developers, service providers, subrecipients and/or contractors and whether the PJ will administer eligible activities directly:

The City of Topeka will follow standard City procurement procedures to issue a Notice of Funds Available (NOFA) stating the amount of HOME-ARP funds available for the acquisition and development of non-congregate shelters and or the development of affordable rental housing units that serve homeless individuals and families. The NOFA will be distributed to all know city partners in the housing development and homeless service provider fields, will be published on the City's website, and distributed to the Topeka Capital-Journal and local media outlets for publication and distribution.

Once the city receives the full HOME-ARP grant award from HUD, it will open applications for a specified period of time. Any organization, developer, CHDO or similar entity will be eligible to apply. All applications will be reviewed for overall eligibility, completeness, and how well they meet address the priorities outlined in this plan. The experience of the applicants and their ability to complete the proposed projects will also be evaluated, as well as their ability to comply with federal funding guidelines and local requirements.

If any portion of the PJ’s HOME-ARP administrative funds were 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 will not allocate funds to a subrecipient or contractor to administer the HOME-ARP grant.

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. The following table may be used to meet this requirement.

Use of HOME-ARP Funding

	Funding Amount	Percent of the Grant	Statutory Limit
Supportive Services	\$ 0		
Acquisition and Development of Non-Congregate Shelters	\$ 1,000,000		
Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)	\$ 0		
Development of Affordable Rental Housing	\$ 754,961		
Non-Profit Operating	\$ 0	0%	5%
Non-Profit Capacity Building	\$ 0	0%	5%
Administration and Planning	\$ 309,699	15 %	15%
Total HOME ARP Allocation	\$ 2,064,660		

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:

The consultations and needs and gaps analysis indicated that there are not enough non-congregate shelter units or affordable housing units to serve sheltered and unsheltered homeless individuals and families. While this is true for all homeless population segments, it is particularly urgent for victims of domestic violence. There is a need for continued provision of wrap-around services to support long-term stability for those who do receive housing and that city will continue to support efforts of partner organization through other programs and funding sources. For instance, Topeka’s City Council recently approved to use \$10 million of its ARPA allocation to help fund the activities of social service organizations, including homeless service

providers. Thus, there is additional funding available for supportive services and the City encourages any applicant for HOME-ARP funds to also pursue ARPA funds.

HOME-ARP Production Housing Goals

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

The City estimates that up to 20 non-congregate units and 20 affordable housing units will be added to the current inventory using HOME-ARP funds. The City anticipates that other funding sources will also be used in these projects, including HOME funds, LIHTC awards, and others.

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

According to the *2020 Citywide Housing Market Study and Strategy*, the City has a goal of supporting the production of 125 units per year and those funded by the HOME-ARP dollars will help meet that goal. The continuation and addition of non-congregate shelter units for victims of domestic violence will provide at-risk individuals and families a safe place to go, while they find the services and legal help that they need. The priority for the affordable housing units funded with HOME-ARP funds is permanent supportive housing—many homeless individuals and families cannot find decent units in the market today. Increasing the supply will give them additional choices, and will make it easier for service providers to connect their clients with quality housing units.

Preferences

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:

- Preferences cannot violate any applicable fair housing, civil rights, and nondiscrimination requirements, including but not limited to those requirements listed in 24 CFR 5.105(a).
- PJs are not required to describe specific projects to which the preferences will apply.

The city is prioritizing non-congregate unit funding for victims of domestic abuse because there is a growing population in that subpopulation and very limited appropriate shelter unit availability. The City is at risk of losing 9 units because of funding challenges for the organization operating those units.

No preference is defined for the affordable housing units, so long as supportive services are also provided.

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 category of qualifying population, consistent with the PJ's needs assessment and gap analysis:

Non-congregate housing for victims of domestic violence is prioritized because of the low supply of existing units/beds for that population, the need for safe environments for that population, the risk of losing 9 units that serve that population, and the fact that partner

organizations are placing individuals and families in hotel rooms as shelter because no other options exist.

If a preference was identified, describe how the PJ will use HOME-ARP funds to address the unmet needs or gaps in benefits and services of the other qualifying populations that are not included in the preference:

The funds allocated to affordable housing unit production will not have any preference in terms of qualifying populations so long as supportive services are available to tenants. Also, should funds allocated to non-congregate shelter go unused after 1 year, those funds will be made available first non-congregate shelter for any homeless population.

The City will stipulate an affordability period of at least 15 years for affordable housing unit production.

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\(b\)](#). The guidelines must describe the conditions under which the PJ will refinance existing debt for a HOME-ARP rental project, including:

- ***Establish a minimum level of rehabilitation per unit or a required ratio between rehabilitation and refinancing to demonstrate that rehabilitation of HOME-ARP rental housing is the primary eligible activity***
Not applicable.
- ***Require a review of management practices to demonstrate that disinvestment in the property has not occurred; that the long-term needs of the project can be met; and that the feasibility of serving qualified populations for the minimum compliance period can be demonstrated.***
Not applicable.
- ***State whether the new investment is being made to maintain current affordable units, create additional affordable units, or both.***
Not applicable.
- ***Specify the required compliance period, whether it is the minimum 15 years or longer.***
Not applicable.
- ***State that HOME-ARP funds cannot be used to refinance multifamily loans made or insured by any federal program, including CDBG.***

Not applicable.

- ***Other requirements in the PJ's guidelines, if applicable:***

Not applicable.