



HOME Investment Partnerships American Rescue Plan Program



HOME-ARP Allocation Plan

November 2022

Clark County HOME-ARP Allocation Plan

Participating Jurisdiction: Clark County, Washington

Date: November 2022

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. Local PJs must consult with all PHAs (including statewide or regional PHAs) and CoCs serving the jurisdiction.

Summarize the consultation process:

Clark County consulted stakeholders by requesting feedback by online survey on the prioritization of eligible activities and qualifying populations. A preliminary draft needs assessment was included with the survey to solicit feedback from providers who work with these populations. A draft of the HOME-ARP Allocation Plan was also emailed to stakeholders for review and input. Stakeholders include a variety of homeless and social service providers in Clark County as well as housing developers, Veteran organizations and By and For agencies that serve disadvantaged populations. Over 400 stakeholders were invited to comment on the development and content of the plan. The organizations listed below are only a few of the organizations consulted. The initial survey and request for feedback was sent to these stakeholders in Winter 2022, before the Allocation Plan was developed. After the plan was drafted these stakeholders were contacted again for comments and feedback.

In addition to the survey and email requests for comment, County staff had additional phone and video call meetings with some of the providers to discuss service gaps, potential projects to fund and processes for prioritizing households for HOME-ARP funding. Meetings of the Urban County Policy Board and Veterans Advisory Board also informed this 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 |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|---|--|
| Vancouver Housing Authority | Public housing authority | Survey, emails, meeting | Contributed information to needs assessment, project ideas |
| Council for the Homeless | CoC Convener | Survey, emails, video meeting, phone call | Contributed information to needs assessment, project ideas, qualifying populations and |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| | | | preferences |
| Share | Homeless service provider | Survey | See attached survey responses |
| YWCA Clark County | Domestic violence shelter | Survey, project proposal | Needs assessment; See attached survey responses |
| Janus Youth | Homeless service provider for youth | Survey | See attached survey responses |
| Cities of Camas, Washougal, Battle Ground, Ridgefield, LaCenter, Yacolt, and Woodland | Clark County small cities | Participation in Urban County Policy Board | Made HOME-ARP funding recommendations |
| Clark County Public Health | County department | Survey | See attached survey responses |
| ESD112 | School District | Survey | See attached survey responses |
| Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber | Small business assistance | Survey | See attached survey responses |
| Clark County Veterans Assistance Center | Veterans service provider | Survey and consistent, ongoing in-person discussions about Veteran needs | Veteran housing needs, needs of homeless veterans |
| CDM Caregiving Services | In-home care provider for elderly and disabled | Survey | See attached survey responses |
| Columbia River Mental Health | Mental health services | Survey | See attached survey responses |
| NAACP Vancouver; Latino Community Resource Group; Clark County Volunteer Lawyers Program | Civil rights, fair housing, legal advocacy for underserved populations | Survey | See attached survey responses |

The stakeholder consultation survey was sent to 400+ stakeholders representing a broad variety of local organizations. The above is a small selection of the organizations consulted. 46 responses were received.

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 and 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:

Clark County initially advertised the availability of HOME-ARP funding in conjunction with the 2022 CDBG and HOME Annual Action Plan process. The Urban County Policy Board reviewed applications and made funding recommendations in spring 2022. The HOME-ARP Allocation Plan was released for public comment period in October 2022, with a public hearing scheduled November 1, 2022, prior to submission in HUD's IDIS system as an attachment to the 2021 approved Action Plan.

Public comment period: October 21, 2022 to November 10, 2022

Public hearing: November 1, 2022

Describe any efforts to broaden public participation:

The public hearing was advertised in the local newspaper, the Columbian. Clark County also advertised the HOME-ARP Allocation Plan through the County's social media accounts, Facebook and Twitter. The draft plan was sent out to a diverse stakeholder list, representing a wide spectrum of service-providers and community members to advertise the public hearing and request public comments.

In addition to the Clark County Council meeting, the Urban County Policy Board discussed the allocation of HOME-ARP funding in two public meetings. All Council and Advisory Board meetings were open to the public and were accessible by virtual participation. The Council meeting and public hearing were also in-person. Audio and visual accommodations were made available for all meetings. County Council meetings are also broadcast on local access television (CVTV).

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:

No public comments were received.

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

No public comments were 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.

Size and demographic composition of qualifying populations within Clark County

Qualifying Population #1: Homeless as defined in 24 CFR 91.5: lacking a fixed, regular, adequate nighttime residence such as emergency shelter, exiting an institution or someplace not designed for people to live. Households are also considered to be homeless if they will imminently lose their housing and have no other housing or support networks. Youth under age 25 are considered homeless if they are considered homeless in another federal act or have had no housing or unstable housing in the past 60 days and can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time because of history or conditions.

The share of people experiencing homelessness has increased since 2017, and many of those residents remain unsheltered.

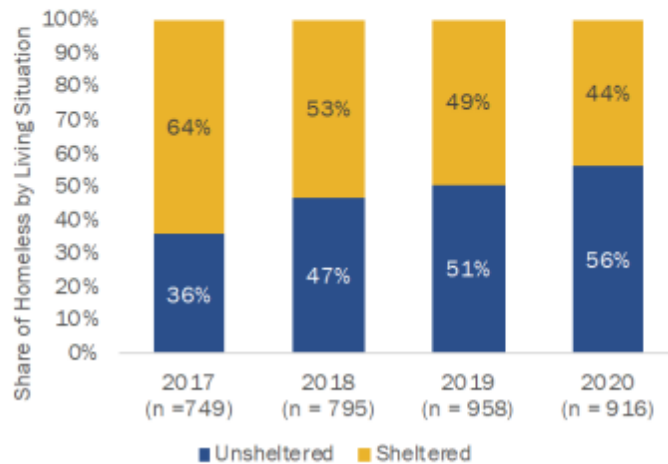
In 2020, 916 people experienced homelessness in Clark County—an increase of 167 people from 2017 (or a 22% change).

In 2020, 516 people experienced homelessness and were unsheltered—an increase of 247 people from 2017 (or a 92% change).

Exhibit 10. Homelessness Estimate (Sheltered and Unsheltered), Clark County, 2017 through 2020

Source: Council for the Homeless, PIT Estimates. Clark County 2019-2022 Homeless System Action Plan, PIT Estimates.

Note: N = total number of persons experiencing homelessness.



The table above is from Clark County’s Housing Inventory and Analysis for the Clark County Unincorporated Vancouver Urban Growth Area and shows how unsheltered homelessness has steadily increased over time.

The Council for the Homeless reports that of the 916 people experiencing homelessness in 2020, 45% were women, 55% were men and 24% were people of color. The Council also reports that 197 of these households (or 21%) were chronically homeless and 64 (or 7%) were survivors of domestic abuse.

Additional demographic information from the 2020 Point in Time count shows:

- 120 families with children
- 41 young adults (ages 18-24)
- 8 unaccompanied minors (under 18)
- 61 seniors (62 and over)
- 54 Veterans

Qualifying Population #2: At risk of Homelessness, as defined in 24 CFR 91.5: households with an annual income below 30% of median family income that do not have sufficient resources or support networks; and has moved more than 2 times in 60 days; living with someone else because of economic hardship; current housing will end in 21 days; lives in a hotel or motel not paid by charitable or government programs; lives in overcrowded housing or is exiting an institution or system of care.

HUD provides housing numbers for the county (including the City of Vancouver), compiled from the Census, called Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data for use in planning. The most recent numbers are from 2014-2018:

| Income by Cost Burden (Owners and Renters) | Cost burden > 30% | Cost burden > 50% | Total |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|
| Household Income <= 30% HAMFI | 11,240 | 9,570 | 14,775 |
| Household Income >30 to <=50% HAMFI | 13,010 | 6,755 | 17,095 |
| Household Income >50 to <=80% HAMFI | 14,610 | 2,990 | 28,130 |
| Household Income >80 to <=100% HAMFI | 5,765 | 685 | 18,930 |
| Household Income >100% HAMFI | 5,545 | 555 | 92,595 |
| Total | 50,170 | 20,560 | 171,520 |

Although it is unknown whether these households have access to sufficient support networks or have moved recently, data shows that there are 11,240 households in Clark County, with extremely low-income, who are cost burdened by their housing, meaning they spend more than 30% of their income toward housing costs. In fact, 9,570 of these households must pay more than 50% of their income to remain in their housing.

The CHAS data also provides information by household income showing housing problems. Housing problems defined by HUD include: incomplete kitchen, incomplete plumbing, more than 1 person per room; or cost burden greater than 30%.

| Income by Housing Problems (Owners and Renters) | Household has at least 1 Housing Problem | Household has no Housing Problems (OR cost burden not available) | Total |
|--|---|---|----------------|
| Household Income <= 30% HAMFI | 11,455 | 3,320 | 14,775 |
| Household Income >30 to <=50% HAMFI | 13,160 | 3,940 | 17,095 |
| Household Income >50 to <=80% HAMFI | 15,490 | 12,640 | 28,130 |
| Household Income >80 to <=100% HAMFI | 6,520 | 12,415 | 18,930 |
| Household Income >100% HAMFI | 7,380 | 85,215 | 92,595 |
| Total | 53,995 | 117,525 | 171,520 |

This table shows that from 2014-2018, 11,455 households in Clark County earn less than 30% of area median income and have a housing problem that could put them at higher risk for homelessness.

Qualifying Population #3: Fleeing, or Attempting to Flee, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, or Human Trafficking, as defined by HUD. For HOME-ARP, this population includes any household that is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking. Domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking are defined in 24 CFR 5.2003. Human Trafficking includes both sex and labor trafficking, as outlined in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000.

The following map from the Council for the Homeless indicates the number of people who lost their housing in Clark County in 2021. Domestic Violence was one of the top reasons for homelessness in 2021, with 338 households reporting that as the cause for losing their housing. The 2022 Clark County Point in Time Count identified 51 survivors of domestic violence who were currently homeless. Additionally, there are many more individuals and families experiencing domestic violence and in need of housing who would not be counted as homeless because they have not fled their abusive environment. These individuals are in need of housing assistance to make the transition out of their current unsafe housing. Service providers like the YWCA can work with survivors throughout this process to transition them directly into new housing.

There are an estimated 3.49 victims of human trafficking for every 100,000 people in the State of Washington. This would translate to roughly 18 victims in Clark County, although this number is probably higher given Clark County’s location between Portland and Seattle along the Interstate 5 corridor, an area known to have particularly high instances of human trafficking.

In preparation of this Allocation Plan, County staff reviewed a variety of statistics on domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking, in Clark County and the wider population. We were unable to disaggregate repeated victimization of the same individuals or households from crime reports (it is known that approximately 80% of women victims of domestic violence have previously been victimized by the same partner), or to determine how many victims attempted to flee in a given year or were displaced as a result of their victimization. However, we know that in a single year there were over

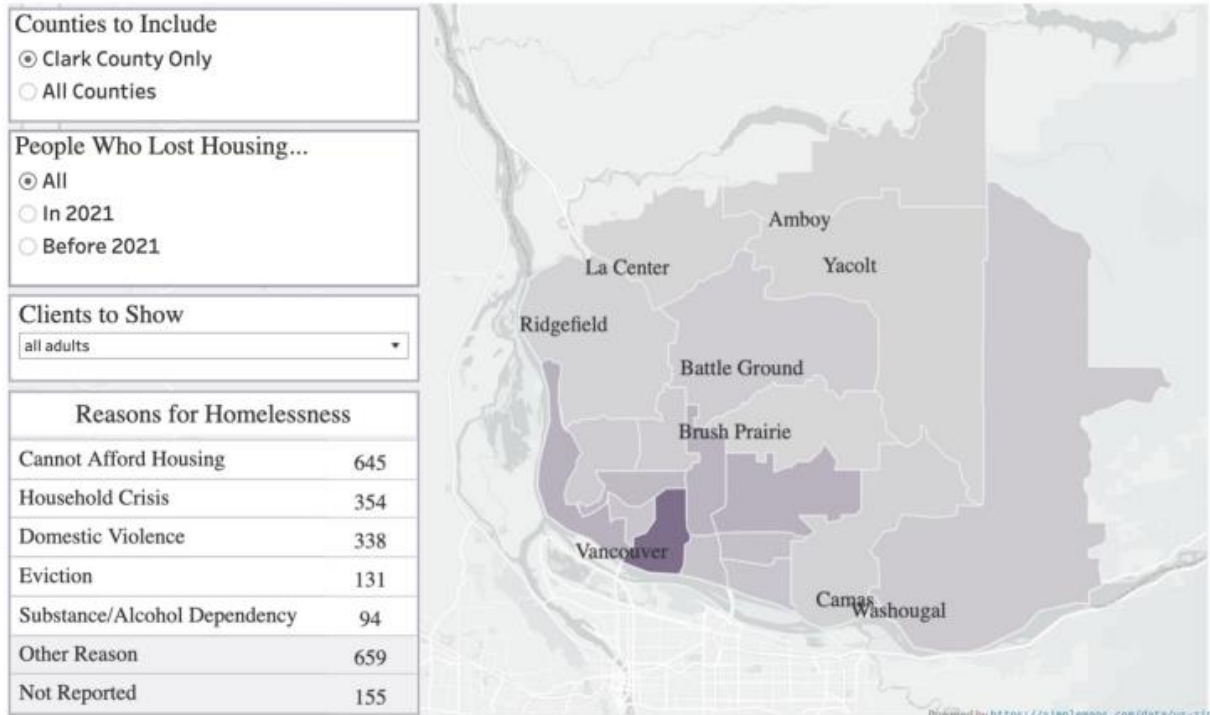
3000 law enforcement service calls for domestic violence, and 80 reported rapes in Clark County. While we were unable to develop a single estimate for the number of people comprising Qualifying Population #3, it is clear that domestic and sexual violence, trafficking and stalking are significant issues in the County. With just 10 emergency shelter beds and 16 rapid rehousing beds dedicated specifically to these survivors, our community is nowhere close to meeting the housing needs of this qualifying population.

Rapid rehousing is an extremely high need for individuals and families who have fled and are experiencing homelessness to prevent survivors from returning to unsafe environments. Survivors need supportive services like housing case management, safety planning and other advocacy programming associated with their housing assistance. PTSD, depression and anxiety are very frequently present among this population. There are two organizations which provide domestic violence-related services within Clark County: YWCA SafeChoice and the Cowlitz Indian Tribe Pathways to Healing program. Clark County also has a Human Trafficking Taskforce coordinating the community response to trafficking, including educating and training service providers to identify and work with this population.

2021 Zip Code Interactive Map

People who access services through the homelessness crisis response system in Clark County are given the option to provide their last permanent zip code and the primary reason they lost their housing. This information is entered into HMIS, a secure database, and can be used to identify regional patterns.

This map is shaded from purple to green. Zip codes shown in purple saw more people losing their housing than expected, while zip codes shown in green saw fewer. Select a client population from the menu on the left or hover over a zip code for more information.



All local data from Clark County, WA HMIS

Qualifying Population #4: Other Populations where providing supportive services or assistance would prevent the family’s homelessness or serve those with the greatest risk of housing instability.

If a household does not qualify under one of the above populations, they may still be assisted if they: have previously been homeless, are currently housed due to temporary assistance and need additional assistance to stay housed; or earn at or below 30% of AMI and are severely cost burdened, OR have income at or below 50% AMI, and meet one of the conditions of “At risk.” Veterans and Families that meet the criteria for one of the qualifying populations described above are also eligible to receive HOME-ARP assistance.

Approximately 24% of renters in the unincorporated Vancouver urban growth area are severely cost burdened (44% are cost burdened). 23% of homeowners are cost burdened. HUD Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy data identified 9,570 households earning below 30% AMI and spending greater than 50% of their income on rent.

There are estimated to be 32,577 Veterans living in Clark County. Clark County has a Veteran By Name List (VBNL) workgroup that meets monthly to case conference Veterans who are homeless and coordinate outreach from Veteran service providers. There were 83 Veterans on average who were active on the VBNL in the last 12 months. Clark County has a history of strong support for Veterans with a Portland-VA medical campus that includes two Veteran housing developments, and the Clark County Veterans Assistance Center (CCVAC), that serves Veterans with a range of needs, including housing. The Clark County Veterans Assistance Fund funds housing and homelessness services at the CCVAC.

The following tables from the Clark County 2020 Community Needs Assessment (data from US Census) provide additional information about the most economically vulnerable populations in Clark County to whom housing services may prevent housing instability and homelessness. Youth experience the highest rates of poverty in Clark County. People of color experience disproportionately high rates of poverty compared to white residents of Clark County.

Population by Gender

| Report area | Male | Female | Percent Male | Percent Female |
|-----------------------------------|---------|---------|--------------|----------------|
| Clark County, WA total population | 231,128 | 237,531 | 49.3 | 50.7 |
| Clark County, WA below poverty | 19,018 | 24,366 | 8.2 | 10.3 |

Population by Age

| Report area | Age 0-4 | Age 5-17 | Age 18-35 | Age 35-64 | Age 65 and over |
|-----------------------------------|---------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|
| Clark County, WA total population | 6.1% | 17.9% | 21.2% | 39.7% | 15% |
| Clark County, WA below poverty | 13.3% | 11.2% | 11.4% | 7.3% | 7.2% |

Population by Race

| Report area | White | Black | Asian | American Indian Alaska Native | Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander | Other Race | Multiple Races |
|-----------------------------------|-------|--------|-------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|----------------|
| Clark County, WA total population | 84.7% | 1.7% | 4.6% | 0.6% | 0.8% | 2.6% | 5.0% |
| Clark County, WA below poverty | 8.65% | 14.85% | 11.0% | 11.4% | 19.9% | 15.2% | 12.5% |

Population by Ethnicity

| Report area | Total | Number Hispanic or @Latin | Percent Hispanic or Latin@ | Non-Hispanic or non-Latin@ | Percent non-Hispanic or Latin@ |
|-----------------------------------|---------|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Clark County, WA total population | 468,659 | 44,891 | 9.6% | 368,406 | 78.6% |
| Clark County, WA below poverty | 43,384 | 7,215 | 16.1% | 29,186 | 7.9% |

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

- **Sheltered and unsheltered homeless populations;**
- **Those currently housed populations at risk of homelessness;**
- **Other families requiring services or housing assistance to prevent homelessness; and,**
- **Those at greatest risk of housing instability or in unstable housing situations:**

The Point In Time Count from 2020, indicated the following needs in Clark County:

INCREASE SHELTER BEDS: The Clark County Homeless Action Plan identifies a need for nearly 100 new 24/7, year-round shelter beds, including those for people with high health needs, youth and domestic violence survivors.

INCREASE RENT ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES: The community must fund additional permanent housing programs that provide rent assistance and supportive services (Rapid Re-housing and Permanent Supportive Housing).

- Rapid Re-housing is designed to help people exit homelessness quickly and return to permanent housing by providing three core activities including housing identification, limited financial assistance and housing-based supportive services. Due to the lack of affordable housing in our community, many households need longer-term rental assistance and support.
- Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) programs are linked with services that help residents maintain housing and improve their quality of life. People in PSH have been shown to reduce their dependence on systems of care and access behavioral/physical health supports.

CREATE SHARED HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES: With an increase in the number of youth, seniors and domestic violence survivors experiencing homelessness, shared housing can offer stable housing in untraditional and affordable ways. A program focused on seniors experiencing homelessness should be funded with a focus on outcomes versus outputs, recognizing long-term stability is more important than the number of matches. Host home programs focused on youth age 24 and younger should be explored and opportunities to support DV survivors with shared housing should be created.

EXPAND AND ENHANCE STREET OUTREACH: Outreach staff are often the only connection to high-risk persons living unsheltered. Health care professionals in partnership with outreach staff and people with lived experience of homelessness, must be deployed as “Street Medicine Teams.” These teams can assess, treat, and educate patients, and provide follow-up evaluation and care as needed.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR PEOPLE WITH EXTREMELY LOW-INCOME: Clark County must dedicate itself to increasing the supply of housing and creating new housing opportunities for people with diverse incomes. This includes people who have zero income, those who rely on the Aged, Blind and Disabled (ABD) program, and those who receive social security.

Identify and consider current resources available to assist qualifying populations, including shelter, supportive services, TBRA, and affordable and permanent supportive housing

The following tables are from the Clark County Housing Inventory Chart published by the Council for the Homeless on February 24, 2022.

| Emergency Shelter: Non-permanent congregate beds or rooms where a household can reside. Supportive services are provided and focus on meeting the basic needs of the residents and addressing barriers to moving into permanent housing. | | | |
|---|---|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| Agency Name | Shelter Name | Beds | Population |
| Catholic Community Services of Southwest Washington | Bertha Cain Baugh Place <i>(non-congregate; opened 2022)</i> | 85 | Single Women and Couples 55 years + |
| Catholic Community Services of Southwest Washington | Bertha’s Too <i>(non-congregate; opened 2022)</i> | 32 | Single Women and Couples 55 years + |
| Family Promise | Family Promise | 14 | Families |
| Janus Youth | Oak Bridge Youth Shelter | 5 | Youth under 18 |

| | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|------------|---------------------------------|
| Outsiders Inn | St. Paul & WHO St. Paul | 30 | Single Men |
| Outsiders Inn | The Outpost Community | 23 | Singles and Couples |
| Share | Share - WHAT | 18 | Single Women |
| Share | Homestead | 63 | Families & Four Single Women |
| Share | Share House | 30 | Single Men |
| Share | Orchards Inn | 58 | Families & Four Single Women |
| YWCA | Clark County Safe Choice | 10 | DV Survivors (Singles/Families) |
| Total Beds | | 368 | |

Temporary/Severe Weather Emergency Shelter: Time limited congregate beds or motel space where households can reside overnight, especially during winter and severe weather.

| Agency Name | Shelter Name | Beds | Population Type |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------|
| Council for the Homeless | Motel Vouchers | 25 | All populations |
| Janus Youth – Ascend | Motel Vouchers | 7 | Youth-headed 18 – 24 |
| Janus Youth | Hotel Vouchers | 3 | Youth-headed 18 – 24 |
| Living Hope Church | Severe Weather Shelter | 29 | All populations |
| Outsiders Inn | Satellite Overflow Shelter | 19 | All populations |
| WHO – St. Andrew | WHO – St. Andrew | 36 | Single Women, Couples, Families |
| Total Vouchers/Beds | | 35/84 | |

Transitional Housing: Time limited site-based housing paired with supportive services for people with low to medium vulnerability. Household must exit the housing once program ends.

| Agency Name | Program Name | Beds | Population Type |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------|----------------------------|
| Janus Youth | Caples Terrace | 39 | Youth 18 – 24 |
| Open House Ministries | Open House Shelter & Annex | 59 | Families and single women |
| Open House Ministries | Pinewood Terrace | 34 | Families |
| Second Step Housing | CF Transitional Housing | 7 | Families, singles, couples |
| Share | Resident Transitional | 20 | Single adults |
| Xchange Church | Transitional Housing | 28 | Singles and couples |
| Total Beds | | 187 | |

Rapid Re-housing: Time limited rent assistance in scattered site units paired with supportive services for people with medium to high vulnerability. Household can remain in housing once program ends.

| Agency Name | Program Name | Units | Population Type |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------|--------------------------|
| Cowlitz Tribal Health | Cowlitz Tribe - RRH | 11 | Tribal Member |
| Impact NW | Impact NW - RRH | 11 | All Populations |
| Janus Youth | Janus Nest 2 – City/County | 44 | Youth (18-24) |
| Lifeline Connections | Lifeline TBRA/COV RRH AHF | 5 | All Population |
| Salvation Army | TSA - COV RRH AHF | 35 | All Populations |
| Share | ASPIRE HOME/ESG/Pros | 108 | All Populations |
| Share | Share HEN RRH | 121 | People with a disability |

| | | | |
|-------------|--------------------|------------|-----------------|
| YWCA | ESG-CV RRH | 16 | Survivors of DV |
| | Total Units | 351 | |

| Permanent Supportive Housing: Permanent affordable housing with intensive supports for people who are most vulnerable in the community. | | | | |
|--|---|-------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Agency Name | Program Name | Type | Units | Population Type |
| Comm Services NW | CSNW PSH NW, NW II, Way Home, Way Home 3 | Scattered | 38 | Singles/Couples |
| Housing Initiative, LLC | The Pacific | Site-based | 18 | Singles/Couples |
| Housing Initiative, LLC | Elwood | Site-based | 44 | Singles/Couples |
| Impact NW | Impact NW – PSH/local | Scattered | 17 | Singles/Couples |
| Janus Youth | Janus Connections | Scattered | 6 | Youth (18-24) |
| Lifeline Connections | Lifeline PSH Local | Scattered | 11 | Singles/Couples |
| Share | ASPIRE - Story Street, B2H4, Bridging the Gap | Scattered | 37 | Families |
| Share | Share - Lincoln Place | Site-based | 30 | Singles/Couples |
| Share | Share - Senior Program | Scattered | 5 | Over 55+ |
| Share | Share Step Forward | Scattered | 13 | Singles/Couples |
| VHA | Central Park Place | Site-based | 70 | Singles/Couples |
| VHA | Central Park Place - VASH | Site-based | 2 | Veterans |
| VHA | Freedom's Path - VASH | Site-based | 40 | Veterans |
| VHA | Isabella Court II | Site-based | 85 | Families |
| VHA | HUD VASH | Scattered | 182 | Veterans - All |
| VHA/Lifeline/CSNW | Merriwether | Site-based | 32 | Singles/Couples |
| VHA | Rhododendron Place | Site-based | 30 | Singles/Couples |
| | Total Units | | 660 | |

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

Clark County struggles with having enough affordable rental options for households with rental barriers or low incomes. Although relationships between the small cities in Clark County are good, it can be difficult to outreach and provide a high level of service and affordable housing to the more rural communities in the county; many of the affordable housing projects are developed in or near the City of Vancouver where more services and economic opportunities are available. Public transportation and

social services outside of the metropolitan areas are limited. Available resources to meet the needs identified in this Consolidated Plan are a constraint. Clark County continues to assess ways to increase affordable housing in outlying areas of the county through planning and conversation with small cities.

As stated in the Homeless Action Plan, Clark County is fortunate to have many philanthropic and community-minded businesses, individuals, foundations and nonprofits seeking to address homelessness. Through these partnerships our system offers shelter (safe parking spaces, winter shelter, severe weather shelter and congregate shelter), housing (recovery, interim and permanent), basic need services (showers, food/meals, laundry, fellowship), rental assistance and much more. Clark County has a robust Homeless Crisis Response System doing outreach and maintaining shelters.

A 2015 Housing Needs Assessment by the State of Washington determined that there were just 16 units affordable for every 100 households making below 30% AMI. The study identified just 48 subsidized units available for every 100 qualified renters in the 0-30% AMI category. Housing development in Clark County has not kept up with the pace of population growth, and affordable housing development is far behind.

Emergency rental assistance programs available during the COVID-19 pandemic contributed significantly to filling the gap in housing affordability and preventing households from becoming homeless. These programs are now ending, leaving an additional gap in rental assistance for permanent housing available directly to homeless or at-risk families.

While the current service delivery system covers all sub-populations and types of services needed to prevent and end homelessness, resources are not scaled to the extent needed to adequately respond to homelessness. The Homeless Action Plan calls for increased mobile outreach, strengthening prevention and diversion practices, leveraging community resources and increasing housing options, both for transitional and permanent housing.

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:

A stagnant wage structure, rising rents, low vacancy rates, domestic violence, mental and physical health challenges, the inability to gain or sustain stable employment, generational poverty, and loss of system support by those leaving institutions are all characteristics that have been linked with instability and increased risk of homelessness.

Identify priority needs for qualifying populations:

Clark County has identified Affordable Housing and Homelessness as one of the top needs in our community as shown in the 2020 Consolidated Plan:

