

REVISED DRAFT (Pending Comments)

DeKalb County, Georgia

HOME-ARP ALLOCATION PLAN

HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program

American Rescue Plan

December 8, 2022

CONTENTS

Executive Summary	4
Consultation.....	5
Summary of Consultation Process	5
List of Organizations Consulted and Summary of Feedback	6
Public Participation	7
Efforts to Broaden Public Participation.....	7
Public Comments and Recommendations Received	9
Public Comments and Recommendations Not Accepted and Reasons Why.....	9
Needs Assessment and Gap Analysis.....	9
Size and Demographic Composition of Qualifying Populations	9
Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless Populations	9
At-risk of Homelessness.....	11
Fleeing, or Attempting to Flee, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking or Human Trafficking.....	12
Other Populations: Currently housed and at risk of repeat homelessness.....	13
HUD Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy Severe Housing Cost Burden 2015-2019 Data.....	13
DeKalb County, GA Affordable Housing Snapshot – 2020	14
COVID-19 Related Emergency Rental Assistance.....	15
Veterans and Families that Include Veterans.....	15
Unmet Housing and Service Needs of Qualifying Populations	16
Current Resources Available to Assist Qualifying Populations	19
Current Resources: Congregate Beds and Non-congregate Shelter Units.....	19
Current Resources: Supportive Services	19
Current Resources: Tenant-based Rental Assistance	20
Current Resources: Affordable and Permanent Supportive Rental Housing	21
Shelter, Housing, and Service Delivery System Gaps.....	23
Characteristics of Housing Associated with Increased Risk of Homelessness for Other	

Populations.....	27
Priority Needs for Qualifying Populations	27
Level of Need and Gaps in Service Delivery	27
HOME-ARP Activities	27
Uses of HOME-ARP Funding.....	29
Rationale for Uses of HOME-ARP Funding.....	29
HOME-ARP Housing Production Goals.....	30
Preferences	30
HOME-ARP Refinancing Guidelines.....	30
Appendices	
Public Hearing Notice, Public Participation Survey, and DeKalb County Community Development Web-page.....	Appendix A
HOME-ARP Survey Results Summary	Appendix B
HOME-ARP Newspaper Public Notice Proofs	Appendix C
HOME-ARP Stakeholders’ Consultation Feedback Chart.....	Appendix D

Executive Summary

DeKalb County, Georgia, has been allocated \$7,800,800 of the HOME-American Rescue Plan Act (HOME-ARP funding from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)). To receive the HOME-ARP allocation, the County developed this HOME-ARP Allocation Plan, which will become part of the County’s PY2021 HUD Annual Action Plan by substantial amendment.

To ensure broad community and public input into the DeKalb County HOME-ARP Allocation Plan, the County engaged in consultation with the required stakeholders and involved many other organizations and individuals during the public participation phase, including a virtual consultation session, a survey of stakeholders, a 15-day public comment period, and a public hearing.

The needs assessment and gap analysis identified the following needs and gaps within the County.

- 2022 DeKalb County’s Point-in-Time-Count Data:

Total Number of sheltered people in families with children	Total Number of Homeless Individuals w/o children	Total Number Sheltered Individuals	Total Number of Unsheltered Individuals
281 – Individuals approximately 70 families	284	121	163

- The 2015-2019 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Data from HUD reported 9,705 homeowner and 23,265 renter households with incomes at or below 30% of Area Median Income (AMI) are at risk of homelessness in the County.
- The 2015-2019 HUD CHAS data indicates 9,585 homeowners and 22,930 renter households with an annual income at or below 30% AMI with a cost burden at the most significant risk of housing instability.
- The 2015-2019 HUD CHAS data reports that 8,290 homeowners and 20,340 renter households with incomes more than 30 and but equal to or less than 50% AMI are at risk of homelessness in the County.
- DeKalb County’s three Housing Authorities have 6955 housing vouchers to help very low-income DeKalb residents with safe and decent housing.
- According to the DeKalb Housing Authority, there are currently 25,000 people who qualify for vouchers, but no housing vouchers are available.
- DeKalb County has one public housing property with 75 units; no units are currently available, and the waiting list consists of 92 families.
- Increases in housing costs coupled with a new-found reluctance of property owners to rent to low-income households make it challenging to relocate families to stable housing situations and for households to remain stably housed.
- According to DeKalb County school reports, 162 students (from self-paying households) live in hotels. The School System relies on parental reports for this information. They suspect that the number is higher. A survey of hotels with known Code Enforcement violations found more than 200 “self-payers” in 5 hotels in crime-ridden areas.

- A recent study by Emory University indicated that the share of affordable rental units has steadily declined in DeKalb. The percentage of rental units affordable to households with incomes below 50% AMI declined by 54% during the 2000-2019 timeframe.

To assist cost-burdened households in obtaining and maintaining safe, decent, and affordable housing, the County will use the HOME ARP allocation to fund Tenant-based Rental Assistance (TBRA) and to provide needed Supportive Services for all qualifying populations.

Consultation

Summary of Consultation Process - In developing this Allocation Plan, the County deployed a multi-stage strategy to engage the community and stakeholders. The County published an online survey, convened HOME-ARP Public Information and Public Hearing meetings, interviewed representatives from organizations that served qualified populations, presented HOME ARP information, answered questions, and received comments and recommendations from participants at CoC on May 24, 2022, and July 20, 2022; CDBG/HOME/ESG Public Hearing on July 16, 2022; and Veteran service providers on May 10, 2022. The specific information collected regarding the needs of qualifying populations provided the data required to formulate the County's Allocation Plan priorities. This section summarizes the consultation efforts made by the County. See Appendix A: Public Hearing Notice, Public Participation Survey, and DeKalb County Community Development Web page.

The County's HOME-ARP stakeholders' consultation, public participation, draft plan review, and comment period was conducted from June 20 to December 23, 2022. All related HOME-ARP documents were published in English, with instructions to contact the County's Community Development Department for translation assistance.

Furthermore, a survey was developed and distributed, allowing all interested parties to comment. The survey explored issues of fair housing, affordability, the needs of those experiencing homelessness, at risk of homelessness, and concerns of other vulnerable populations. A summary of the survey results is attached as Appendix B.

The County convened a HOME-ARP Public Information Meeting on June 16, 2022. During this session, the County presented an overview of HOME-ARP (including the allocated amount), defined qualifying populations, discussed the eligible uses of funds, and described the required components of the HOME-ARP allocation plan, including the process and anticipated dates for a Public Hearing and plan submission. The County requested comments and recommendations from meeting participants and provided contact information for follow-up comments/recommendations/questions. Participants' questions centered around plans and the process for agencies to receive funding for the provision of services.

The County convened a Public Hearing on August 8, 2022, and December 8, 2022. During this meeting, the County provided an overview of HOME-ARP (including the allocation amount), defined qualifying populations, discussed the eligible uses of funds, and described the required components of the HOME-ARP allocation plan, including the process and anticipated timeline for submitting the plan. The County presented its recommendation for the planned use of HOME-ARP funds (non-congregate shelter and supportive services) and the basis for this recommendation. The County asked participants their recommendations, questions, and comments about the Plan. Comments included questions regarding the shelter's location and size, the shelter's

management, the provision of counseling/case management, and whether they could apply for funding to operate the shelter. The County responded to all questions, announced the location of the draft proposal, and provided contact information for comments/questions/recommendations regarding the proposal. The County informed participants that it would receive comments through December 23, 2022 (the end of the public comment period).

The County posted meeting notices on its website, published notices in the local paper, and distributed notices to the CoC through the CoC distribution list.

Meeting Date	Meeting Topic
June 16, 2022 6:00 pm	Public Information Meeting – HOME ARP Program Overview
August 8, 2022, and December 8, 2022 6:00 pm	Official Public Hearing - HOME-ARP Draft Document
June 20 - December 23, 2022	Public Comment Period

Additionally, the Community Development Department provided HOME-ARP information during community engagement opportunities and through direct messages to community partners. Overall feedback in these meetings primarily focused on the need for temporary housing and wrap-around supportive services to ensure housing stability while families search for permanent housing. Finally, the County engaged agencies and service providers whose clientele included qualifying populations to identify unmet needs and housing and service delivery systems gaps. The County interviewed 20 agencies. The overall themes from these interviews included the demand for housing, arrearage assistance for rent and utilities, and wrap-around supportive services to support an effective transition from homelessness to housing instability to housing stability. Stakeholders noted that without critical supportive services and rental assistance households who are cost-burdened, the County would fall short of meeting the needs of the County’s most vulnerable populations.

List of Organizations Consulted and Feedback Summarized

Agency/Org Consulted	Type of Agency/Org	Method of Consultation	Feedback Summarized
CoC Planning Committee Meeting	Continuum of Care	Virtual	General Questions: Can individual agencies apply for funding for a project? How will DeKalb allocate funds?
CoC Agencies	Continuum of Care	Virtual	Follow-up question from an agency asking if they can apply for funds for a shelter.
CoC Veterans Subcommittee – Agencies serving veterans, representatives	Veterans’ Service Providers	Virtual	Questions regarding service to veterans. Said would consider gaps and ways to fill gaps in current veterans’ services.

from VISN and VA CRRC			
Lithonia Housing Authority	Public Housing Agency	In-person	There is a need for more low-income housing. Especially since most public housing has gone away. As rents increase, more people are homeless in motels. Property owners are increasingly not taking section 8 vouchers.
Decatur Housing Authority	Public Housing Agency	Telephone	We have a considerable amount of people who need affordable housing. Many people now need somewhere to go due to increasing rental rates. Many property owners are no longer taking our vouchers.
DeKalb Housing Authority	Public Housing Agency	Telephone	Recommendation on the need for more affordable housing and shelters, funds for arrearage, and deposits. Risk of homeless due to rents increasing 30-40%
Metro Fair Housing	Fair Housing	In-person	Recommendation on the need for affordable housing and demand for placement before permanent housing placement. Willing to collaborate for the best outcomes.

Additional Consulted Organizations can be found under Appendix D.

Public Participation

A public notice to announce the availability of the HOME-ARP Allocation Plan for public comment was posted in the Champion Newspaper on June 16, 2022, August 8, 2022, and November 24, 2022, and the County’s website <https://www.dekalbcountyga.gov/community-development/home-arp>. A copy of the notice is attached to this Plan as Appendix C.

Efforts to Broaden Public Participation - In developing this Allocation Plan, the County conducted a diverse outreach strategy to engage the community and stakeholders through three methods. An online survey was published in English (with translation to other languages available upon request), a virtual HOME-ARP Public Information Meeting and Public Hearing were convened, and direct one-on-one outreach interviews with qualifying participant service providers were conducted. The specific information collected about qualifying populations sought to strengthen existing relationships with housing and service providers, establish new collaborative relationships to increase coordination, and gather data and other information to help determine the County’s Allocation Plan priorities. This section summarizes the consultation efforts made by the County.

The County’s HOME-ARP stakeholders’ consultation, public participation activities, draft plan review, and comment period were conducted from June 20 to December 23, 2022. All related HOME-ARP documents were made in English (with translations available to other languages upon

request). The online survey of the general public and direct surveys with qualified population service providers showed that more than 90% of responses indicated that the County should focus on providing emergency housing for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. A summary of survey and interview results is attached as Appendix B: Survey Results and Appendix D. Consultation Feedback.

The survey explored issues of fair housing, affordability, the needs of those experiencing homelessness, at risk of homelessness, and concerns related to other vulnerable populations. When asked what populations the County should focus on for support, 90% of respondents selected families experiencing homelessness and at risk of homelessness (Respondents were able to select more than one category). Similarly, when asked to rank the most urgent needs in the County, creating affordable housing, homeless preventive services, employment assistance, and job training programs were identified as needs. When asked what housing needs were most significant in the County, more rental assistance for families experiencing homelessness and at risk of homelessness was selected as the top need.

The County held a Public Information Meeting and a Public Hearing to solicit input and consult with key stakeholders that serve and support the qualifying populations identified in the HOME-ARP Notice issued by HUD in September 2021. At these meetings, the County provided an overview of HOME-ARP, reviewed definitions of qualifying populations, discussed the eligible uses of funds identified within the guidance provided by HUD, and described the required components of the HOME-ARP allocation plan, including the process and anticipated timeline for submitting the plan. Additionally, the County announced that the required Public Comment Period was open for the required 15 days.

Meeting Date	Meeting Topic
June 16, 2022 6:00 pm	Public Information Meeting – HOME ARP Program Overview
August 8, 2022, and December 8, 2022 12:00 pm	Official Public Hearing - HOME-ARP Draft Document
June 20 - December 23, 2022	Public Comment Period

During the sessions, the County solicited questions, comments, and feedback about the eligible uses of funds through an interactive dialogue with participants. Notice of the meetings was posted on the County’s website, the local newspaper (The Champion), and the Office of Community Development shared consultation opportunities through their platforms, including Facebook, and by direct messages to community partners. Overall feedback in these meetings primarily focused on needing more rental assistance, affordable housing options, arrearage assistance for rent and utilities, and wrap-around supportive services for all qualifying populations. Finally, the County engaged stakeholders one-on-one to explore further the needs of those experiencing homelessness, those at risk of homelessness, and other vulnerable populations. Invitations for interviews were sent to 20 stakeholders. The overall themes from these conversations included the need for housing assistance, arrearage assistance for rent and utilities, and wrap-around supportive services.

Stakeholders noted that without critical supportive services and housing targeted at homeless households, DeKalb County would fall short of meeting the needs of the County’s most vulnerable populations.

Public Comments and Recommendations: The County received 21 responses to the online survey. The survey explored issues of fair housing, affordability, the needs of those experiencing homelessness, at risk of homelessness, and concerns of other vulnerable populations. When asked what populations the County should focus on for support, 90% of respondents selected families experiencing homelessness and at risk of homelessness (Respondents were able to select more than one category). Similarly, when asked to rank the most urgent needs in the County, creating affordable housing, homeless preventive services, employment assistance, and job training programs were identified as most in need. When asked what housing needs were most significant in the County, more housing assistance for families experiencing homelessness and at risk of homelessness was selected as the top need. During interviews with stakeholders, they indicated that temporary housing during the housing search, affordable housing, and counseling/case management/stabilization services were needed. **See Appendix B: Survey Results and Appendix D: Consultation Feedback**

Public Comments and Recommendations Not Accepted and Reasons Why - All comments were received and accepted.

Needs Assessment and Gap Analysis

Size and Demographic Composition of Qualifying Populations - DeKalb County (764,382) is the fourth largest county in the Atlanta metropolitan area based on the 2020 Census. DeKalb County had the lowest population growth among the five metro Atlanta core counties between 2000 and 2020 (14.8%). Regarding race and ethnicity, non-Hispanic Whites comprised 28 percent in DeKalb County, and the Black population in DeKalb was 50%.

1. Sheltered Homeless and Unsheltered Populations

DeKalb County’s Community Development, Continuum of Care, and Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Lead have developed a data dashboard using its HMIS. Annually, DeKalb Community Development conducts a Point-In-Time Count and Survey of Homeless Individuals as Collaborative Applicant for the DeKalb CoC. The information below was obtained from the dashboard, point-in-time count, and survey data.

2022 DeKalb County’s Point-in-Time-Count Data

Total Number of sheltered people in families with children	Total Number of Homeless Individuals w/o children	Total Number Sheltered Individuals	Total Number of Unsheltered Individuals
281 – Individuals approximately 70 families	284	121	163

Size - On February 17, 2022, DeKalb County counted 565 homeless people.

- 163 people sleeping in unsheltered locations
- 402 people staying in shelter locations
- Approximately 230 people in sheltered locations were in ESG-CV Temporary shelter units. These units will no longer be available when ESG-CV funds are exhausted for the year. This information indicates that the number of unsheltered homeless would have increased by approximately 230 if the units were unavailable.
- Using an annualized projection, more than 2,147 people will be homeless in DeKalb in 2022. (The projection does not include those in Temporary Emergency Shelters.)

Demographic Information - Point-In-Time Count and Survey data revealed the following information.

- 281 family members were sheltered. Approximately 31 shelter beds for families in DeKalb County. More than 80% of these family members were in temporary emergency shelter spaces that would not exist when ESG-CV funds were exhausted in 2022.
- 80% of the unsheltered population consisted of single African American males
- 10 youth parent households with 26 household members were homeless
- 23 unaccompanied youth were homeless (18-24 years of age)
- 80% of the counted population was unsheltered males
- 10 veterans were homeless
- 53% of the homeless population disclosed disabilities
- Less than one-third were chronically homeless
- Homeless Survey Data: Reason for homelessness was economic challenges (low income and no employment).
- Homeless Survey Data: 36% of the respondents were homeless for the first time.

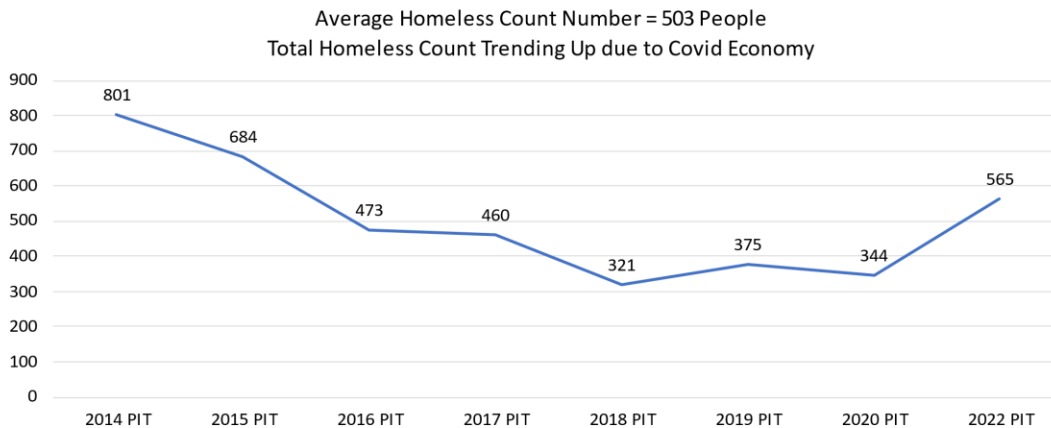
Gap as of October 14, 2022

	Number of Family Households waiting for Emergency Shelter	Number of People Comprising Family Households	Number of Children in Family Households	Number of Families w/o children	Number of Adults w/o children
	118	381	232	125	144
GAP		381			144

This information presents the number of people requesting emergency shelter through outreach or coordinated entry.

The Chart below provides homelessness trending information for Dekalb County:

Homeless Count Trend



2. At-Risk of Homelessness

Precise data indicating the number of households at risk of homelessness in DeKalb County is not readily available. However, DeKalb County uses several indices to estimate this population's size. Shown below is information that indicates population size.

Incomes for DeKalb County households (according to 2020 census data) are as follows: According to 2020 census data, 17.2% - 25% of households in DeKalb County have incomes at or below 30% AMI (2022 Adjusted Home Income Limits). According to 2020 census data, the DeKalb County median household income is \$65,116. Approximately 39% of DeKalb County households have incomes of less than \$50,000.

According to HUD data, per capita income in DeKalb County is \$29,711. The DeKalb County poverty rate is 17.86%. However, 2020 census data indicate that 14.4% of all people are below the poverty line, 22.4% of people under 18 are below the poverty line, and 12% of people 18 and older are below the poverty line. More recently, in July 2021, the US Census Bureau reported that approximately 15.8 percent of DeKalb County residents live in poverty.

- a. Information that can inform an estimate of the number of moves experienced by households is not available.
- b. In the DeKalb County School System, parental reports reveal that 182 students live in the homes of others because of economic hardships. School System officials rely on parental reports and believe this number is higher than reported. The Georgia Department of Community Supervision reports that 127 recently released ex-offenders live with others due to economic hardship. Other statistics are not readily available.

- c. DeKalb County records reveal that 17,619 dispossession cases have been filed as of July 2022. Demographic information regarding this data is not available.
- d. According to DeKalb County school reports, 162 students (from self-paying households) live in hotels. The School System relies on parental reports for this information. They suspect that the number is higher. A survey of hotels with known Code Enforcement violations found more than 200 “self-payers” in 5 hotels. Case Managers within the school system indicated that several families now report Air B&B residency and state that they have been evicted and that the Air B&B is cheaper than a hotel. Unfortunately, students who reside in Air B&B are not eligible for McKenny Vento benefits.
- e. Information regarding overcrowded conditions is not readily available.
- f. The Georgia Department of Community Supervision reports that 127 recently released ex-offenders live with others due to economic hardship or live as self-paying in hotels.
- g. DeKalb County Housing Assistance Programs that provide Tenant-based Rental Assistance: - Certain non-profits or government assistance programs offer immediate rent help to qualifying populations: homeless or at risk of homelessness, veterans, single parents, those experiencing domestic violence, the unemployed, and others.
- h. Homeless people in DeKalb County may be placed into transitional housing or a homeless shelter or given a free motel voucher, then apply for a security deposit program or help with the first month’s rent.

3. Fleeing, or Attempting to Flee, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking or Human Trafficking

According to a March news release, Gov. Brian Kemp has said the state had a 92% increase in sexual assault incidents. The DeKalb County Solicitor-General says nearly one-third of the 13,000 misdemeanor cases she prosecutes yearly is domestic violence. And the number of cases is on the rise.

The Women’s House, which serves victims of domestic violence and sex trafficking in DeKalb and Fulton, also helps women who live anywhere in metro Atlanta reports that since March 1, 2020, it has seen a 42% increase in domestic violence crisis calls and 4,130 calls to its 24-hour hotline through April 23, 2022. The most prominent request centered around immediate housing for families experiencing domestic violence.

DeKalb County Human Services has provided support for individuals experiencing domestic violence for more than 30 years through grants to state-certified domestic violence non-profits. These agencies provide immediate assistance in the aftermath of violence, including shelter services, legal advocacy, support, daycare and children services, supervised visitation, mental health counseling, and a variety of other wrap-around services. In 2021, the grant allocation assisted 4,157 DeKalb survivors of domestic violence.

Furthermore, according to the Georgia Commission on Family Violence, Judicial District Four within the State of Georgia, which is comprised of DeKalb County, throughout the five-year

reporting period, the rate of family violence incidents reported to law enforcement increased by 4.9%. 14,722 family violence incidents were reported in Judicial District Four from 2013-2017.

The Georgia Bureau of Investigation says that human trafficking is becoming more common across the state and metro Atlanta and that DeKalb County has some of the highest human trafficking rates.

Number of people not served XXXX.

4. Other Populations

DeKalb County uses the information shown below as Other Populations indices.

- a. Other Families Requiring Services - DeKalb County has received reports of families requiring services who have received services and need further financial assistance or supportive services to remain housed. However, the number of households is unavailable through HMIS or serving agencies.

- b. At Risk of Greatest Housing Instability – According to a recent study conducted by Emory University and commissioned by DeKalb County, one out of three DeKalb households has a housing affordability problem, with proximately 20% reporting a cost burden and 16 % having a severe cost burden. The study also indicated that the share of affordable rental units has steadily declined in DeKalb. The proportion of rental units for low-income households (at or below 80% AMI) fell from 93% in 2000 to 80% in 2019; the share of rental units for very low-income households declined by 54%. The chart below shows the cost burden and income distribution of the estimated percent of all renters and owners who are severely cost-burdened. Moreover, the pandemic has exacerbated already challenging affordable housing issues and affected households earning 100% AMI and lower.

2015-2019 HUD CHAS Severe Housing Cost Burden Data

Income by Housing Problems	Owner	Renter
Cost Burden <= 30% AMI	9,705	23,265
Cost Burden >30% to <=50% AMI	8,485	20,690
Cost Burden >50% to <=80% AMI	8,450	15,665
Total	26,640	59,620
Income by Cost Burden	Cost Burden >30%	Cost Burden >30%
Household Income >30% AMI	9,585	22,930
Household Income <30% to >=50%	8,290	20,340
	Cost Burden >50%	Cost Burden >50%
Household Income >30% AMI	7,820	19,790
Household Income <30% to >=50%	3,780	7,185

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

According to 2015-2019 CHAS Data, 43,955 renter households, and 18,190 owner households are experiencing at least one of four housing problems, and these households' incomes were 50% or less of the AMI. The chart above shows the cost burden and income distribution of the estimated percent of all renters and owners who are severely cost-burdened.¹ Moreover, the pandemic has exacerbated already challenging affordable housing issues and affected households earning 100% AMI and lower.

DeKalb County, GA Affordable Housing Snapshot - 2020

Total Affordable Apartment Properties	76
Total Low-Income Apartments	11,513
Total Housing Units with Rental Assistance	3,173
Percentage of Housing Units Occupied By Renters	44.75%
Average Renter Household Size	2.61
Average Household Size	2.63
Median Household Income	\$51,376 ±\$634
Median Rent	\$991 ±\$8
Percentage Of Renters Overburdened	51.66% ± 1.4pp
Total Population	716,331

Population and Household Demographics - DeKalb County is a county in [Georgia](#) with a population of 716,331. There are 267,396 households in the county, with an average household size of 2.63 persons. 44.75% of households in DeKalb County are renters.

Income and Rent Overburden in DeKalb County - The median gross income for households in DeKalb County is \$51,376 yearly or \$4,281 monthly. The median rent for the county is \$991 a month. Households that pay more than thirty percent of their gross income are considered Rent Overburdened. In DeKalb County, a household making less than \$3,303 a month would be overburdened when renting an apartment at or above the median rent. 51.66% of households who rent are overburdened in DeKalb County.

Area Median Income In DeKalb County - One's income determines affordable housing program eligibility. Each household's income is compared to all other households in the area. This is accomplished through a statistic established by the government called the Area Median Income, most often referred to as AMI. The AMI is calculated and published each year by HUD.

In DeKalb County, HUD calculates the Area Median Income for a family of four as \$96,400.

- **30% AMI Income Limits**
Renters earning up to 30% of the DeKalb County AMI may qualify for rental assistance programs that target Extremely Low-Income households for a family of four as \$28,900.
- **50% AMI Income Limits**
Renters earning up to 50% of the DeKalb County AMI may qualify for rental assistance programs that target Very Low-Income households for a family of four as \$48,200.

A Brookings Institution report showed that Atlanta ranks top for income inequality. Last summer, an analysis by Harvard and Berkeley researchers showed that metro Atlanta has the lowest rate of social mobility. And back in the spring of 2021, another Brookings study showed that the metro region has one of the fastest-growing rates of suburban poverty. That escalation in suburban poverty may be why three metro counties are among the top 10 nationally for lack of affordable housing.

Nationally, there are 29 rental units for every 100 “extremely low-income,” or ELI, households. As classified by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, ELI households have incomes of 30 percent or less of the median for their area. The researchers used the number of ELI households and the number of affordable rentals in each county to calculate the number of low-priced units for every 100 poor households. In DeKalb County, that rate is 14.5. That is less than fifteen affordable units for every 100 low-income families.

COVID-19 Related Emergency Rental Assistance - The pandemic disrupted rental markets during 2020, but most markets rebounded strongly in 2021, evidenced by near record-low vacancy rates and sharp rent rises. Asking rents in professionally managed apartments increased sharply in 2021, with annual rent growth rising from 1.7 percent in the first quarter of 2021 to 10.9 percent in the third quarter. Atlanta ranked ninth among the top 30 metro areas in annual rent growth for all asset classes in 2021.

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

- At risk of homelessness or experiencing housing instability (e.g., past due notice, non-payment of rent, or eviction notice) and
- A household income less than 80% AMI.²

Data from DeKalb County’s Emergency Rental Assistance Program can help quantify those individuals and households in DeKalb County that are housing insecure. According to the Emergency Rental Assistance Program reporting required by the U.S. Department of the Treasury, DeKalb County has over \$50 million in payments. Data also indicates that more than 2600 households in DeKalb County received rental assistance.³

Veterans and Families that include a Veteran Family Member - According to the Veterans Population 2022, County-level Count, 41,917 Veterans in the County, and the total Expenditure on veterans was \$620,007, according to the National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics. In Georgia, DeKalb County is ranked 58th of 159 counties in Veterans Affairs Departments per capita and 1st of 159 counties in Veterans Affairs Departments per square mile. Veterans can qualify for several benefits, from medical help for those who suffered an injury due to their service to pensions and money for education or job retraining.

¹ Severe Cost Burden: renter households for whom gross rent is 50% or more of household income.

² While 80% AMI is the upper limit of assistance, many state and local ERA programs have developed systems to prioritize assistance for households earning 30% AMI.

³ Emergency Rental Assistance monthly compliance report data: <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/assistance-for-state-local-and-tribal-governments/emergency-rental-assistance-program/reporting>.

Unmet Housing and Service Needs of Qualifying Populations

1. Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless Populations

On February 17, 2022, DeKalb County counted 565 homeless people. There were 163 individuals in unsheltered locations and 402 in sheltered locations. An annualized projection indicates that 2,147 individuals will be homeless in DeKalb County in 2022. It should be noted that of the 402 individuals in sheltered locations, 206 individuals were in temporary emergency shelter beds funded through ESG-CV. These shelter beds are not available after the expiration of the ESG-CV funds in 2022.

The gap in emergency shelter beds in DeKalb County is further demonstrated by the report from Coordinated Entry that the system received 91 requests for emergency shelter in July 2022, and none could be served. In August 2022, Coordinated Entry received 124 requests for emergency housing from households with children. Only three families could be served due to the insufficient supply of emergency shelter beds and the planned phase-out (due to diminished ESG-CV funds) of temporary emergency shelter beds.

Analysis: The data presented above demonstrate a need for more shelter space in the DeKalb County service area. Based on staff analysis of the current state of the hotel acquisition real estate market, it's not feasible to use HOME-ARP in acquiring property and renovation to develop a non-congregate shelter. The cost of the identified properties was high and exceeded the funding available. Also, the cost of redeveloping the property and the required operational costs were projected to be extremely expensive.

2. At Risk of Homelessness

In the DeKalb County School System, parental reports reveal that 182 students live in the homes of others because of economic hardships. School System officials rely on parental reports and believe this number is higher than reported. According to DeKalb County school reports, 162 students (from self-paying households) live in hotels. The School System relies on parental reports for this information. They suspect that the number is higher. A survey of hotels with known Code Enforcement violations found more than 200 "self-payers" in 5 hotels. Case Managers within the school system report that several families now report Air B&B residency and state that they have been evicted and the Air B&B is cheaper than a hotel. Unfortunately, students who reside in Air B&B are not eligible for McKenny Vento benefits. Information regarding overcrowded conditions is not readily available.

The Georgia Department of Community Supervision reports that 127 recently released ex-offenders live with others due to economic hardship or live as self-payers in hotels. Other statistics are not readily available.

DeKalb County convened a focus group with individuals residing in local motels and hotels in the county. The information shared centered on the following: the inability to secure affordable rental units in safe and desirable locations, the additional food costs associated with residing in a hotel or motel, the lack of resources to cover the extra costs associated with moving into new rental units, security deposits, utility deposits, first-month rent, moving expenses and other expenses related to moving into a new rental unit.

DeKalb County records reveal that 17,619 dispossessory cases have been filed since July 2022.

According to a recent study conducted by Emory University and commissioned by DeKalb County, one out of three DeKalb households has a housing affordability problem, with proximately 20% reporting a cost burden and 16 % having a severe cost burden. Recent studies have shown that in communities, when households spend more than 32% of their income on rent, the incidence of homelessness increases. A household that spends more than 30% of household income on housing is considered cost-burdened.

The study also indicated that the share of affordable rental units has steadily declined in DeKalb. The proportion of rental units for low-income households (at or below 80% AMI) fell from 93% in 2000 to 80% in 2019; the share of rental units for very low-income households declined by 54%. The proportion of rental housing units with only physical problems was 5.2% in 2019.

Also, data from the PIT homeless count data showed that 34% of the homeless population were first-time homeless households, and 64% experienced homelessness multiple times.

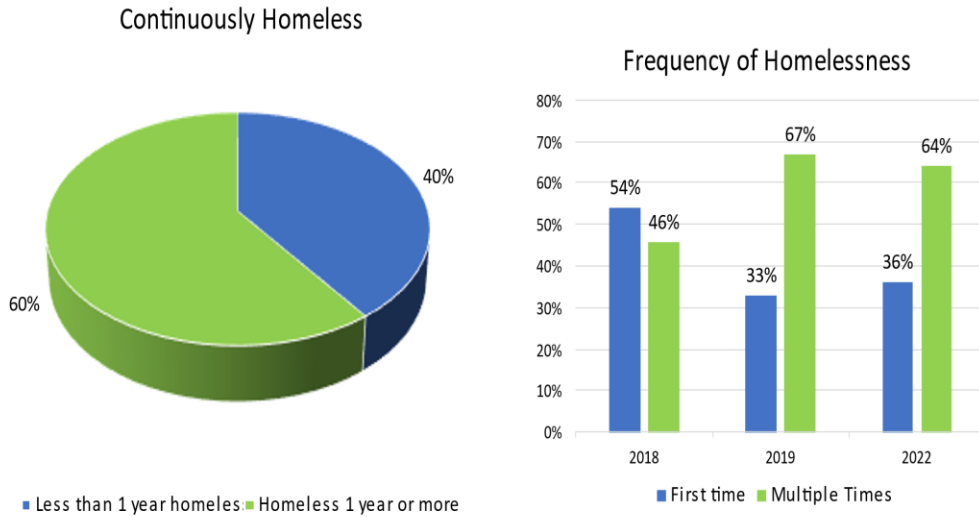
Analysis: The data presented above demonstrate that many households with school-age children reside in hotels and motels due to the high cost of rental units, arrearages, security deposits, utility deposits, and other economic challenges. Moreover, a DeKalb County focus group discussion consisting of individuals residing at six local hotels centered around the additional unforeseen cost which prevents them from moving into rental units, such as food cost (small refrigerators in the units), extra hotel charges for the number of occupancies, storage charges, etc. Individuals returning from incarceration are also residing in hotels and motels. Also, security concerns and issues with the properties' cleanliness create health issues. DeKalb County enacted a Hotel Ordinance that prevents hotel owners from renting for more than 30 days.

Additionally, the data indicates a significant portion of the DeKalb County population are cost-burdened households and need rental assistance and other support services such as job training, housing counseling, and mental health services.

3. Other Families Requiring Services to Prevent Homelessness and Experiencing Severe Cost Burden 30%-50% AMI.

DeKalb County Community Development Office PIT indicates that 36% were first-time homeless individuals, and 64% were repeated homeless individuals within a 12 to 24-months period.

Homeless Survey: Characteristics



According to 2015-2019 CHAS Data, 22,930 renter households, and 9,585 owner households are experiencing a severe housing cost burden, and these households earn less than 30% AMI.

Income by Cost Burden (Renters only)	Cost burden > 30%	Cost burden > 50%
Household Income <= 30% AMI	22,930	19,790
Household Income >30% to <=50% AMI	20,340	7,185
Income by Cost Burden (Owners only)	Cost burden > 30%	Cost burden > 50%
Household Income <= 30% AMI	9,585	7,820
Household Income >30% to <=50% AMI	8,290	3,780

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

According to Atlanta Regional Commission, inflated rent prices exacerbate renters’ cost burden. While rental prices have gone up, so have the prices of everyday goods and services, from gas to groceries. Atlanta’s inflation rate tops national averages, experiencing over 10% increases in the cost of goods from March 2021 to March 2022, compared to just under 8% nationally. For metro Atlantans, the cost of living across the board has become more expensive. 16% increases in

housing costs and 10.6% in other goods and services are dwarfing wage increases, which clocked in at a modest 3.1% growth for 2021.

Current Resources: Qualifying Populations - There are approximately 2,379 total beds offered for the homeless by multiple agencies in DeKalb County. This bed count includes the entire array of beds offered to homeless households.

Current Resources: Congregate Beds and Non-congregate Shelter Units - The information below shows the number of beds by category available on February 17, 2022.

Category	Number of Beds
Congregate Shelter	160 (includes contracted beds outside GA-508)
Non-congregate Shelter	206 (End September 2022)
Transitional Housing	63
Permanent Housing	1950 (Housing Choice Voucher, Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Re-Housing, and VASH)
Emergency Housing V.	113

DeKalb County has developed a coordinated entry process that standardizes the access, assessment, prioritization, and referral procedure for all people across all participating providers in the DeKalb County CoC. Thus, each system entry point uses the same pre-screen tool and makes referral decisions based on a standard set of factors. Coordinated referrals are made with a thorough understanding of all programs, including their specific requirements, target population, offered services, and bed availability.

Unlike many coordinated entry systems, DeKalb Coordinated Entry also provides referrals directly to emergency shelter facilities on a first-come-first-served basis based on space availability and shelter requirements. Participants are not prioritized for shelter participation. If shelter space is unavailable, coordinated entry develops a waitlist and refers from the waitlist on a first-come-first-served basis) as space becomes available.

This approach means that households who are homeless and at risk of homelessness are identified early, screened, and connected with the appropriate intervention or match possible that addresses their immediate needs.

Current Resources: Supportive Services - According to a study by Emory University, supportive service provision for homeless and low-income households is extremely limited within the county due to a lack of dedicated resources for homeless and at-risk households at the state and local levels. Supportive services for homeless persons typically include case management and life skills training. Transportation and assistance dealing with alcohol and drug abuse and mental health issues are other common services available. Most homeless prevention efforts involve assistance with housing costs or case management and advocacy.

DeKalb County partners with Grady Hospital, St. Joseph's Mercy Care, DeKalb Community Services Board (CSB), and the Community Advance Practice Nurses to provide health and mental

health services to homeless and at-risk households. Providers and the County work with the Projects for Assistance in Transition for Homelessness (PATH) Team. This team provides outreach and comprises case managers, mental health workers, substance abuse counselors, specially trained police officers, and homeless service providers. The PATH team works with housing providers and County funded street outreach workers to engage homeless persons and guide them to appropriate services.

DeKalb County also works closely with WorkSource DeKalb and Goodwill Industries to provide resume writing, job training, and employment services to the homeless and at-risk. DeKalb County will continue to work with program providers to increase the percentage of participants that receive mainstream benefits at program exit. DeKalb County will continue to provide information and training to the service providers on how their staff can assist clients in accessing mainstream benefits.

Current Resources: Tenant-Based Rental Assistance_ At present, Georgia is ranked No. 7 in the top 10 worst states for affordable housing by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Higher rents are a national phenomenon. In 2021 rental rates rose in 48 of the nation's 50 largest metro cities, with the average monthly cost of a one-bedroom apartment in Georgia rising more than 20 percent in 2021. To address this issue, the proposed DeKalb County Housing Crisis Resolution would establish a rental registry that enables researchers and policymakers to study the business practices of corporate landlords so counties can respond with appropriate local measures. A significant component of the resolution was inspired by the rise of private investors, Wall Street, and limited liability companies moving into the residential rental market. It requires landlords to register their properties so it is known precisely where rental units are located within communities.

Three housing authorities serve DeKalb County residents: the Housing Authorities of DeKalb County, the City of Decatur, and the City of Lithonia. Between public housing, Housing Choice Vouchers, project-based vouchers, and units under the Section 202 and Section 811 programs, over 9,400 subsidized units are available in the county, housing 25,000 individual residents. According to the most recent Consolidated Plan, DeKalb County operates 5,080 TBRA vouchers.

Georgia is one of 25 states where rent control is not allowed. Landlords can charge whatever they think the market will bear without caps on rent increases. The Atlanta Regional Commission has identified housing as a top regional issue. The agency has developed the Metro Atlanta Housing Strategy to help local governments address rising costs. ARC has also been tracking eviction filings in collaboration with the Atlanta Fed and Georgia Tech. The findings demonstrate that the annual rate of increase is accelerating. In the past year, rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Atlanta increased by 16%, compared to an average yearly growth of around 4% for the previous six years. An example of the average % rent increase for DeKalb County (2021 to 2022) for Stone Mountain is 27%.

Certain non-profits or government assistance programs offer immediate rent help to qualifying populations: homeless or at risk of homelessness, veterans, single parents, those experiencing domestic violence, the unemployed, and others, as delineated below. However, albeit several

organizations, programs, and agencies offer rental assistance, funds are limited and are exhausted rapidly, causing an emergency need for service that goes unfilled.

- a. DeKalb County's Tenant-Landlord Assistance Program - Since February 2021, TLAC and several nonprofit organizations in DeKalb have distributed more than \$61 million for eligible tenants and landlords from the Federal Emergency Rental Assistance program. DeKalb County's Tenant-Landlord Assistance Coalition (TLAC) is to provide financial assistance to eligible households for the payment of rent, rent arrearage, utilities, utility arrearage, and other housing costs incurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The program is designed to assist eligible families that have an annual family income of 80% of the median income for DeKalb County. The program operated from February 2021 through November 2022. DeKalb County has distributed \$52.8 million to almost 4,900 families for rent and utilities. There are currently 645 pending applications, and DeKalb has \$41.3 million in available ERA1 Reallocation grant funds.
- b. DeKalb County Coordinated Entry provides support and information around housing, rent help, shelters, and more. Referrals are given as part of the continuum of care program. Tenants with an eviction or pay or quit notice can be given immediate emergency rental assistance. Housing stability is also a focus.
- c. Supportive Services for Veteran Families of DeKalb County helps veterans and their families. The goal of any short-term or long-term rent or even security deposit help from SSVF is housing stability.
- d. Housing Authority of DeKalb County – They process HUD section 8 vouchers for paying rent and applications to public housing or low-income apartments. There is also self-sufficiency, home-buying programs, information on job placement, and more.
- e. Georgia Rental Assistance Program - assists low-income residents in securing funding for residents behind on rent payments and utilities. Locally, the program is organized by members of the DeKalb National Council of Negro Women (NCNW). The Georgia Rental Assistance Program is a statewide program that can provide up to 18 months of rental and utility assistance, paid directly to participating landlords and service providers on behalf of tenants.
- f. DeKalb County Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) - has funds available to assist households who have experienced an unexpected, uncontrollable, one-time crisis or emergency that has prevented the applicant from paying their utilities or rent. Applicants must demonstrate that they are facing disconnection of utility service (i.e., gas, electricity, or water) or eviction from their residence.

Current Resources: Affordable and Permanent Supportive Rental Housing - DeKalb County has approximately 1401 Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) beds. This housing is provided through Veterans Administration VASH vouchers (796 vouchers) and CoC permanent supportive housing (605 beds). Additionally, there are approximately 549 permanent housing beds (Rapid Re-housing). Non-profit and faith-based organizations in DeKalb County provide the beds.

The DeKalb Housing Authority and DeKalb CoC collaborated in 2021 and early 2022 to offer 113 Emergency Housing Vouchers. These vouchers were available to homeless residents at risk of homelessness or fleeing domestic violence. Clients were referred for vouchers through the CoC Coordinated Entry process or directly from domestic violence providers.

DeKalb County offers developers loans funded through the HOME Investment Partnership Program to develop affordable units for residents at or below 80% AMI. Currently, there are approximately 600 HOME units in DeKalb County.

DeKalb County Housing Vouchers

Housing Authority	Number of Vouchers
Lithonia Housing Authority	196
DeKalb County Housing Authority	5716
Decatur Housing Authority	1043

Analysis: Recognizing the housing crisis, hundreds of millions of federal dollars have been distributed over the past two years to counties and cities across Georgia, while nonprofit and community organizations rallied to raise funds to help Atlanta-area renters avoid eviction. But accessing these funds has proved challenging. For months, local organizations ran out of funding within days as renters in need flooded hotlines seeking financial assistance to tide them over. Meanwhile, county program applications for assistance regularly closed due to overwhelming response, sometimes not reopening for weeks. At the core of the housing crisis is a lack of supply and cost-burdened households’ inability to secure the financial resources needed to secure and maintain housing because of the high cost of rental units. There is not enough housing in DeKalb or metro Atlanta to meet demand, which also causes prices to increase. This shortage is an ongoing local, state, regional, and national problem, driving up housing costs for buyers and renters across the county.

“More than half of all DeKalb residents meet the definition for cost-burdened households, in that they are spending between 30 and 50 percent of their income on housing,” said Allen Mitchell, director of DeKalb County’s Department of Community Development. A benchmark for affordability is housing that consumes less than a third of household income.

DeKalb County has about 6955 vouchers to subsidize rent for lower-income DeKalb residents, according to the Housing Authorities in DeKalb County. DeKalb Housing Authority indicates a waiting list of 25,000, but no housing vouchers are available now. Therefore, more assistance is needed to cover direct rental assistance and support services focused on providing resources to help prepare cost-burdened renters for long-term success. Support services include rental arrearage assistance, move-in expenses, housing counseling, job training, and employment.

Shelter, Housing, and Service Delivery System Gaps

1. Shelter

There is one full-time emergency shelter within the DeKalb County entitlement area. This shelter provides 31 beds for households with children. All beds may only be utilized when household configurations allow merging families within rooms. This inadequate bed supply caused the County to contract for beds in downtown Atlanta. This contracting situation causes additional problems, as children experience early morning departures (6 AM or before), long bus rides to school, and late afternoon drop-offs (after 6 PM) at the shelter. School System representatives report that the distance from the shelter to school also results in low attendance and poor student performance.

The 2022 Point-In-Time Count and Survey indicated 565 homeless persons in DeKalb County on the night of the Count. The count and survey showed that 281 family members in households with children were homeless. All families with children were sheltered; however, DeKalb County operated an overflow shelter (non-congregate temporary emergency shelter) during the period with 206 beds and apartments with an additional 24 beds. The overflow beds are temporary and cannot be funded after September 2022. Without overflow beds, a sizable number of households will be unsheltered. According to Coordinated Entry, in July 2022, 91 families requested shelter. Coordinated Entry reported that 124 households with children requested shelter in the August 2022 timeframe. Only three households could be served.

An insufficient number of low-barrier shelter beds and shelter spaces for families with children causes the primary shelter capacity gaps. Further, a segment of the unsheltered population does not access shelter due to a fear of separation from family and partners/pets/possessions, the impact of congregate shelter on their mental health, and general discomfort with the shelter system.

Other factors outside the control or influence of the homelessness service delivery system widen the delivery gap. These factors include the requirements caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the rising cost of housing, the low supply of affordable units, a lack of behavioral health resources, and the mental health condition and consequential requirements of a large number of chronically homeless.

Analysis: The data presented above demonstrate a need for more shelter space in the DeKalb County service area.

2. Permanent Housing

Anecdotal information and information from renters indicate that rent has increased by approximately 20% over the past year. It has become difficult for DeKalb housing search organizations to locate rental units for very low and extremely low-income households. At the same time, property owners are increasing rents as leases expire, causing low-income renters to move out of housing or become evicted. Even voucher holders find it difficult to rent units because many property owners no longer accept vouchers. Many households resort to temporary hotel residency but need to lower their cost burden. This result is causing a lengthening in the time for households to locate affordable units within the County. Therefore, there is a need for increased

focus on low- and very low-income populations in planning affordable housing (e.g., 30% AMI and below). Additional inventory of various housing types, including multifamily housing, is needed to provide housing options for different income levels.

Analysis: Recovery Act, CoC, ESG-CV, CDBG-CV, and ESG funding assist households in paying back rent to prevent homelessness and moving to new units to ameliorate homelessness, but more assistance is needed to support the increased demand for rental assistance and the related support services that will support housing sustainability.

3. At Risk of Homelessness

With the support of the Board of Commissioners and in partnership with DeKalb Magistrate Court, Atlanta Legal Aid, DeKalb Dispute Resolution Center, and the DeKalb Housing Authority, TLAC is designed to provide financial relief to DeKalb renters threatened by eviction and landlords facing revenue losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since February 2021, TLAC and several nonprofit organizations in DeKalb have distributed more than \$61 million for eligible tenants and landlords from the Federal Emergency Rental Assistance program. DeKalb County’s Tenant-Landlord Assistance Coalition (TLAC) is to provide financial assistance to eligible households for the payment of rent, rent arrearage, utilities, utility arrearage, and other housing costs incurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The program is designed to assist eligible families that have an annual family income of 80% of the median income for DeKalb County. The program operated from February 2021 through November 2022. DeKalb County has distributed \$52.8 million to almost 4,900 families for rent and utilities. There are currently 645 pending applications, and DeKalb has \$41.3 million in available ERA1 Reallocation grant funds.

Analysis: The Housing Authorities of DeKalb County administers the Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance program in DeKalb County (formerly known as Section 8). The Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program is designed to aid low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market. The HCV Program pays a portion of eligible families’ monthly rent directly to the Property Owner/Manager. The HCV Program also includes Project-Based Voucher (PBV) Programs and the Veteran’s Administration Special Housing (VASH) Program, which works jointly with the Veterans Administration.

DeKalb County Housing Vouchers

Housing Authority	Number of Vouchers
Lithonia Housing Authority	196
DeKalb County Housing Authority	5716
Decatur Housing Authority	1043

DeKalb County has about 6955 vouchers to subsidize rent for lower-income DeKalb residents, according to the Housing Authorities in DeKalb County. DeKalb Housing Authority indicates a waiting list of 25,000, but no housing vouchers are available now. Therefore, more assistance is needed to cover direct rental assistance and support services focused on providing resources to

help prepare cost-burdened renters for long-term success. Support services include rental arrearage assistance, move-in expenses, housing counseling, job training, and employment.

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

According to the Georgia Commission on Family Violence, Judicial District Four within the State of Georgia, which is comprised of DeKalb County, throughout the five-year reporting period, the rate of family violence incidents reported to law enforcement increased by 4.9%. 14,722 family violence incidents were reported in Judicial District Four from 2013-2017. The County’s domestic violence providers have indicated a shortage of emergency shelter beds for victims of domestic violence.

Analysis: DeKalb County Human Services has provided support for individuals experiencing domestic violence for more than 30 years through grants to state-certified domestic violence non-profits. These agencies offer immediate assistance in the aftermath of violence, including shelter services, legal advocacy, support, daycare and children services, supervised visitation, mental health counseling, and a variety of other wrap-around services. In 2021, the grant allocation assisted 4,157 DeKalb survivors of domestic violence.

5. Other Populations

Cost burden indicates housing needs and the need for reduced rental costs. Among all renters in DeKalb County who are cost-burdened with a household income of 30% or less, 22,930 households earn less than 30% of AMI, and 19,790 households less than 50% of the AMI.

Income by Cost Burden (Renters only)	Cost burden > 30%	Cost burden > 50%
Household Income <= 30% HAMFI	22,930	19,790
Household Income >30% to <=50% HAMF	20,340	7,185

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

Analysis: DeKalb County’s special populations include the elderly, frail elderly, domestic violence victims, residents with a diagnosis of HIV/AIDS, and residents with substance abuse, mental health, or disability diagnosis. Their unmet needs were determined by input from service providers and the public through the survey, public meetings, and stakeholder interviews. These needs include access to healthcare, affordable, safe housing opportunities in areas with transportation, commercial and job centers, social services, including counseling, case management, and other services and facilities, and safe streets and sidewalks. In particular, interviews indicate the need for supportive services, including support for abused and neglected children, substance abuse services, senior services, and handicapped services; infrastructure improvements, including streets and sidewalk improvements; and health centers.

6. Supportive Services

Stakeholders interviewed for this plan noted the need for increased support services for those experiencing homelessness and those at risk of homelessness.

Analysis: The lack of a dedicated funding stream for wrap-around services is critical to client stability and achieving successful outcomes related to housing sustainability. DeKalb County has no general fund support for supportive services for the homeless and those at risk of homelessness. To address this challenge, more resources are needed to provide resources to community-based organizations.

7. Tenant-Based Rental Assistance

DeKalb Housing Authority offers approximately 5716 Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV), Decatur Housing Authority offers 1043, and Lithonia Housing Authority provides 196. The HCV waiting list time for all three housing authorities is approximately three years. Additionally, DeKalb Housing Authority offered 113 Emergency Housing Vouchers in 2021.

During 2022, to date, DeKalb County agencies provided housing services for approximately 1141 households. Approximately 270 households received prevention services, and 831 households received permanent housing services. Of the number receiving permanent, 201 households were newly housed in 2022. Even with the provision of these services, 273 households are on a permanent housing waitlist.

Analysis: Current residents in public and other assisted housing units immediately need opportunities and support to grow and attain self-sufficiency. These supports include programs in areas such as job training and assistance, childcare, transportation, health-related assistance, after-school programs, adult education, and child educational enrichment.

8. Permanent Supportive Housing

As many people with disabilities live on limited incomes, often just a modest \$771/month SSI payment, there are few options other than public housing. This population needs additional units with accessibility features and supportive services. DeKalb County has 1950 units of permanent supportive housing. DeKalb Coordinated Entry indicates that, currently, 287 individuals are waiting for permanent supportive housing units.

Analysis: The 2019-2023 Consolidated Plan Citizen Input Survey results indicate that housing and services for homeless people were consistently ranked as priority needs by community members who participated in the survey. Survey results show elevated levels of demand for all homelessness services, including permanent supportive housing, permanent housing, assessment and outreach, homeless prevention (including financial assistance for needs such as food and utilities) and rapid rehousing, access to homeless and emergency shelters, transitional housing, wraparound services, and services for homeless youth and youth aging out of foster care. In particular, survey results ranked permanent supportive housing as the highest need for homelessness, followed by permanent housing.

Characteristics of Housing Associated with Increased Risk of Homelessness for Other Populations - Current information indicates that cost-burdened housing conditions, substandard housing conditions (housing with problems), overcrowding, and costly motel stays are among the factors that lead to housing instability. Mental and physical health disabilities also contribute to housing instability.

Priority Needs for Qualifying Populations - The following priority needs have been identified for qualifying populations:

- Supportive Services for all qualifying populations
- Tenant-based Rental Assistance for all qualifying populations
- Administration

Level of Need and Gaps in Shelter, Housing Inventory, and Service Delivery System - The research conducted for this plan involved the review of information from the 2022 Homeless Point in Time Count and Survey, DeKalb County Housing Inventory Chart, DeKalb Performance Measurements (provided to HUD), Emory University study of rental housing in DeKalb, several recently completed studies related to homelessness or households at risk of homelessness, and other vulnerable populations, housing stability, affordable and workforce housing in DeKalb County, as well as documents and data made available from several county departments and agencies. Many national studies and reports on homelessness were also examined and incorporated into the analysis. To provide a more granular view of homelessness and housing affordable in DeKalb County, the plan also includes compiled data from several nationally available sources, such as the American Community Survey, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (special tabulations of the ACS data), other HUD data sets, and the National Housing Preservation Database, among others. Additionally, information was collected from agencies and providers serving qualified populations.

HOME-ARP Activities

The County will use the HOME-ARP funds for the following activities:

- Supportive Services for all qualifying populations
- Tenant-based Rental Assistance for all qualifying populations
- Administration

1. Supportive Services: There are three categories specifically included as supportive services DeKalb County will use under HOME-ARP:

- McKinney-Vento Supportive Services (For homeless persons)
- Homelessness Prevention Services (For persons who are housed and the supportive services are intended to help the program participant regain stability in current permanent housing or move to other permanent housing to achieve stability)

The supportive services may include the following: childcare, improving knowledge and basic educational skills, establishing and operating employment assistance and job training programs, providing meals or groceries, assisting

eligible program participants in locating, obtaining, and retaining housing, certain legal services, and teaching critical life management skills.

The financial assistance services may include the following: rental application Fees, security deposits, utility deposits, utility payments, moving costs, first and last month's rent, payment of rental arrears, short-term financial assistance for rent, and medium-term financial assistance for rent.

- Housing Counseling Services: Staff salaries and overhead costs of HUD-certified housing counseling agencies related to directly providing eligible housing counseling services to HOME-program participants, development of a housing counseling work plan, marketing and outreach, intake, financial and housing affordability analysis, development of action plans that outline what the housing counseling agency and the client will do to meet the client's housing goals and that address the client's housing problem(s), and follow-up communication with program participants.
2. Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA). The County may provide rental assistance, security deposit assistance, utility deposits, and utility payments to qualifying households. DeKalb County may pay up to 100% of these costs for a qualifying household with HOME ARP funds. Other TBRA requirements under consideration: portability, term of rental assistance, maximum subsidy, rent reasonableness, housing quality standards, and use of a HOME-ARP sponsor to serve all qualifying populations.
 3. Administration – The County will use funds from the HOME-ARP allocation for overall program administration.

The County will enter into agreements with subrecipients or contractors to administer HOME TBRA and Supportive Services programs. The County will execute legally binding written agreements that comply with HOME-ARP requirements with the contractors or subrecipient before disbursing any HOME-ARP funds to any entity and will document in their written agreements with supportive service providers whether they are authorizing McKinney-Vento supportive services, homelessness prevention services, Housing Counseling services or some combination of the three. Furthermore, the County will only allocate funds to a subrecipient or contractor after HUD accepts the HOME-ARP allocation plan. A subrecipient or contractor will not be responsible for administering the entire DeKalb County HOME-ARP plan.

Subrecipients and contractors will be selected per the County's established application method for agencies applying for CDBG and ESG projects. A team of reviewers will examine agency applications, score applications according to established scoring criteria, and render funding recommendations. The County will enter into agreements based on recommendations and scoring from reviewers, along with information on previous performance.

To ensure that all qualifying populations are served effectively, the County may select applicants that service specific populations. For example, an agency that specializes in providing services to victims of domestic violence may be selected to provide services only to victims. The County will ensure that there are sufficient agreements with agencies to serve all qualifying populations.

DeKalb CoC Coordinated Entry will provide applicant intake and qualifying population verification to ensure that all qualifying populations receive assistance from the appropriate agencies. DeKalb County operates Coordinated Entry for the DeKalb CoC. With agreement from the CoC Governance Board, DeKalb will expand the role of Coordinated Entry to comply with DeKalb County’s adopted HOME-ARP procedures, preferences, and limitations. HOME-ARP funds may be used to supplement Coordinated Entry operations relating to HOME-ARP.

Use of HOME-ARP Funding

	Funding Amount	Percent of the Grant	Statutory Limit
Supportive Services	\$3,315,340.00 (Proposed)		
Acquisition and Development of Non-congregate Shelters	\$0.00		
Tenant-Based Rental Assistance	\$3,315,340.00 (Proposed)		
Development of Affordable Rental Housing	\$0.00		
Non-Profit Operating	\$0.00	%	5%
Non-Profit Capacity Building	\$0.00	%	5%
Administration and Planning	\$1,170,120.00 (Actual)	%	15%
Total HOME-ARP Allocation	\$7,800,800.00		

Rationale for Uses of HOME-ARP Funding - Distribution of HOME-ARP funds in accordance with priority needs. In accordance with the Needs Assessment and Gaps Analysis, \$3,315,340 of the County’s HOME-ARP funds will be targeted to provide intensive supportive services and homelessness prevention services for all Qualifying Populations. The provision of supportive services will meet the critical needs of all Qualifying Populations.

All qualifying households are eligible to receive supportive services under the HOME-ARP supportive services activity. Supportive services may be provided to individuals and families not already receiving the services outlined in the Notice through another program. DeKalb County will establish separate supportive services activities or may combine supportive services with other HOME-ARP activities.

The County will allocate \$3,315,340 to TBRA, also designed to support all Qualifying Populations. Based on the Needs Assessment and Gap Analysis, cost-burdened households have difficulty paying rent. Without some assistance, many will find their households experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness. This assistance will be attached to the household, not a particular rental unit. A household may move to another unit with continued assistance as long as the unit meets applicable property standards. Furthermore, the County may use the HOME-ARP TBRA sponsors provision to support those experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness. The County will identify nonprofit organizations that provide housing or supportive services to

qualifying households and facilitates the leasing of a HOME-ARP rental unit to a qualifying household or the use and maintenance of HOME-ARP tenant-based rental assistance by a qualifying household.

As noted in the Data Analysis section, DeKalb County needs more rental assistance and supportive services for Qualifying Populations. It will use the HOME-ARP funds to facilitate the development of these services.

HOME-ARP Housing Production Goals

The County will not produce affordable housing units with its HOME-ARP allocation.

Preferences

There will not be any preferences, but all qualifying populations will be served under TBRA and support services.

Preferences Explained – No preferences are established under the DeKalb County HOME ARP Allocation Plan for TBRA. Additionally, for supportive services, the county will not implement any preferences.

Address Unmet Needs and Gaps in Benefits and Services of Qualifying Populations not Included in the Preferences - Surveys indicate that supportive services are a principle need of the qualifying population. The County will provide HOME-ARP supportive services funding to agencies for supportive services (case management, financial assistance, counseling services, job training, housing search, or outreach for qualifying populations).

HOME-ARP Refinancing Guidelines

The County does not intend to use HOME-ARP funds to refinance any existing debt secured.