

CITY OF BATON ROUGE –
PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE

DRAFT SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT
TO THE
2021 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

CITY OF BATON ROUGE – PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT TO THE FY 2021 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Substantial Amendment to the 2021 – 2022 Annual Action Plan is to incorporate \$5,104,454 in HOME-ARP funding via the HOME-ARP Allocation Plan. Funds were appropriated under the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 for the HOME program to provide assistance for the following populations:

- Homeless as defined in 24 CFR 91.5
- At Risk of Homelessness as defined in 24 CFR 91.5
- Fleeing, or Attempting to Flee, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, or Human Trafficking, as defined by HUD in the Notice
- Other populations requiring services or housing assistance to prevent homelessness and other populations at greatest risk of housing instability as defined by HUD in the Notice

II. CONSULTATION

A Stakeholder meeting was held on July 11, 2022. A public hearing is being held on July 19, 2022. Information from those meetings will be added to the amendment prior to submission to HUD.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Citizens are being provided reasonable notice to comment on the substantial amendment. The public notice was published in The Baton Rouge Advocate on July 11th, 2022. A Stakeholder meeting was held on July 11, 2022. A public hearing is being held on July 19, 2022. Information from those meetings will be added to the amendment prior to submission to HUD.

IV. AN ASSESSMENT OF UNMET NEEDS

Homeless as defined in 24 CFR 91.5: Homeless persons that are transitioning out of emergency shelter are typically in need of case Management, which is an integral part of the delivery of services to the homeless. These services are very instrumental in the provision of the total “continuum of care” required to assist homeless persons with the transition from emergency or transitional shelter to permanent housing and independent living. Case Management includes the provision of job training, counseling, adult education, job development, health services, transportation, daily living skills, and childcare. In addition, the number of available permanent supportive housing units does not meet the demand for the units. Although the City-Parish provides assistance to homeless shelters, shelter caseworkers say there are barriers hindering their efforts to move homeless individuals toward self-sufficiency. The lack of decent, low-cost housing,

single room occupancy units and adequate transportation are just a few barriers. Also, the requirement for credit references is often an obstacle to persons and families attempting to obtain rental housing after a period of homelessness. Furthermore, persons with a history of mental illness and who are homeless, often encounter difficulty obtaining rental housing. The needs of the community have consistently outnumbered the funds available for support.

At Risk of Homelessness as defined in 24 CFR 91.5: Particular characteristics that have been linked with instability and an increased risk of homelessness are 1) Renter households with extremely low-income; 2) Veterans who live without familial or community support; 3) Persons with mental and/or physical disabilities living without familial or community support; 4) Households that are headed by persons with substance abuse issues; 5) Homes with family members who are victims of domestic violence; and 6) Formerly incarcerating persons being released from prison. As with homeless persons, persons at risk of homelessness are affected by the same barriers, which may include a lack of decent, low-cost housing units, adequate transportation, and the requirement for credit references when trying to obtain housing. In addition, there is not enough supportive housing available for those who need it.

Fleeing, or Attempting to Flee, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, or Human Trafficking, as defined by HUD in the Notice: According to a February 14, 2022, WAFB Baton Rouge news story, “This past year domestic and dating violence-related deaths were on the rise with 36, nearly doubling the number of deaths from 2020 to 19 of those 23 were intimate partners.... Moore says the Baton Rouge Police Department made 2,154 domestic violence related arrests in 2021. The East Baton Rouge Clerk of Court tracks protective orders issued as a condition of bond, sentencing, or probation in criminal court. Moore says the judges of the 19th Judicial District Court issued approximately 1,200 orders last year, a significant increase from previous years, which averaged around 300.” As stated in the EBR 2020 Consolidated Plan, homes with family members who are victims of domestic violence are linked with housing instability and an increased risk of homelessness. As with the other populations mentioned above, this population is affected by the same barriers, which may include a lack of decent, low-cost housing units, lack of supportive services and case management, adequate transportation, and the requirement for credit references when trying to obtain housing. In addition, there is not enough supportive housing available for those who need it.

Other populations requiring services or housing assistance to prevent homelessness and other populations at greatest risk of housing instability as defined by HUD in the Notice: Particular characteristics that have been linked with instability and an increased risk of homelessness are 1) Renter households with extremely low-income; 2) Veterans who live without familial or community support; 3) Persons with mental and/or physical disabilities living without familial or community support; 4) Households that are headed by persons with substance abuse issues; 5) Homes with family members who are victims of domestic

violence; and 6) Formerly incarcerating persons being released from prison. “Other” populations at risk of homelessness are affected by the same barriers, which may include a lack of decent, low-cost housing units, lack of supportive services and case management, adequate transportation, and the requirement for credit references when trying to obtain housing. In addition, there is not enough supportive housing available for those who need it.

V. HOME-ARP ACTIVITIES

The American Rescue Plan 2021 made available an additional \$5,104,454 to the City-Parish under the HOME Investment Partnerships-American Rescue Plan (HOME-ARP) Program. These funds are to be used primarily to benefit individuals and families specified in “qualifying populations” for homelessness assistance and supportive services.

HOME-ARP activities may include: (1) development and support of affordable housing, (2) tenant-based rental assistance (TBRA), (3) provision of supportive services; and (4) acquisition and development of non-congregate shelter units. A Request for Proposals will be issued for HOME-ARP funds which will allow organizations and developers to submit proposals for projects that address the populations mentioned in this amendment. Approximately 10% of the allocation will be used for administrative support, with the remainder of the allocation being used to fund affordable housing development and related supportive housing services that increase housing stability and affordability within the City-Parish.

VI. HOME-ARP PRODUCTION HOUSING GOALS

The City-Parish estimates that approximately one hundred (100) affordable rental units will be produced and/or supported by this HOME-ARP allocation. Once proposals are submitted from organizations and developers, they will be reviewed and awarded based on multiple factors including leveraging of funds and units assisted/created.

VII. PREFERENCES

At this time, the City-Parish does not intent to give preference to one or more qualifying populations or subpopulations.