

Application for Alexandria as an AARP Age-Friendly Community

Part 1) Please provide a brief summary of the community policies, programs and services that are targeted toward older people and how the community plans to become more age-friendly.

AARP sponsors the Age-Friendly Communities Network, which is affiliated with the World Health Organization. AARP requires the chief elected official of a community to approve the application, which for Alexandria has been developed by the Commission on Aging (COA). Once enrolled in the Network, the organization responsible for the application has two years to develop an Age-Friendly Plan. The timing for Alexandria is very appropriate because the current Strategic Plan on Aging focused its recommendations on the years 2013 – 2017, and Alexandria’s Age-Friendly Plan would be designed for execution in 2018 to 2020. Though its attention is directed to aging, the Age-Friendly Plan will focus on a livable community for all ages and will be developed with a multi-generational lens.

In essence, planning for aging residents encompasses the needs of the entire community. What is good for those who are aging also benefits the young and everyone in between. A well-developed and executed plan also creates a legacy for younger generations and establishes a context for future evaluation of the needs of residents as they age.

The Strategic Plan on Aging The Alexandria of Our Future: A Livable Community for All Ages Current Goals: 2013 – 2017

- **Communications and Outreach:** Information about services and programs is readily available and accessible in a variety of formats and venues for older residents of Alexandria, their families and caregivers, local organizations and businesses.
- **Housing:** A range of affordable, accessible and supportive housing is available that meets the needs of older residents of the City to be able to age at home.
- **Transportation:** A variety of mobility options, including pedestrian-safe streets, make moving in and around the city and region possible for Alexandrians of all ages and abilities.
- **Community Services:** Community services accommodate the expectations and needs of aging Alexandrians and support their caregivers.
- **Economic and Workforce Development:** The important contributions of older Alexandrians to the city’s economy are recognized, and the innovative entrepreneurship of older residents is encouraged.
- **Quality of Life:** The quality of life of all Alexandrians is enhanced by the many volunteer activities of its older residents and their continued involvement in the social and civic life of the city
- **Health, Wellness and safety:** All residents, with special attention to lower-income, older city residents, optimize their wellness and receive the health care they require.

The Strategic Plan on Aging has been an effective tool in advancing the livability of Alexandria for older residents. The Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) and the COA will continue to work on these goals with many agencies in government, the city’s non-profit organizations, faith-based institutions and businesses. It will greatly benefit aging residents,

however, if the timeline is extended to 2020 and Alexandria joins the Network of Age-Friendly Communities, and emphasizes the goals that require more attention.

The city has a history of generous support for aging residents, but the city budget shortfalls caused by reduced tax revenues resulting from several years of recession have created obstacles to achieving these goals, especially in affordable and accessible housing. Every jurisdiction in Northern Virginia, because of reliance on the federal government for funds, has suffered significant reduction of revenues due to sequestration and subsequent appropriation reductions.

It has been very helpful, however, in pursuing the plan's goals, to work with the city's departments whose goals comport with those of the aging plan. The Division of Aging and Adult Services and the COA work closely with the Office of Housing, the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services, the Department of Planning and Zoning, the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities, the Health Department and the Workforce Development Center. DAAS is a division of the Department of Community and Human Services, which provides important access to an array of services supportive of older adults.

The Eight Domains and Goals for Age-Friendly Alexandria 2018 – 2020

Eight domains are the fundamental goals for the World Health Organization's designation of an age-friendly community. They include: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings; Transportation; Housing; Social Participation; Respect and Social Inclusion; Civic Participation and Employment; Communication and Information; and Community and Health Services. The domains are very similar to the seven goals of Alexandria's Strategic Plan on Aging, as stated above. AARP and the World Health Organization support a flexible approach, and the Alexandria plan will add one domain and combine three.

The Alexandria Commission on Aging, with the support of the Division of Aging and Adult Services, occupies a leadership role in developing the city's Age-Friendly Plan. Following approval of the current plan in 2012, the Commission assumed the responsibility for advocating for execution of the plan through collaboration with many entities in the city. It will continue this collaborative approach in developing the Age-Friendly Plan.

A City with a Diverse Population – Diversity as a Domain

The Strategic Plan on Aging approved by the City Council in 2012 was developed after intensive efforts to gain the understanding of the needs of all aging residents in the city. It has become apparent, however, to DAAS, the COA, the Alexandria Council of Human Services Organizations (ACHSO) and many other organizations in the city that a more robust analysis and response to the needs of older minority residents is needed.

The diversity of Alexandria's population is one of the city's defining characteristics. Because aging may pose a variety of special challenges to minority populations, diversity will be a major and cross-cutting priority for Alexandria's Age-Friendly Plan, and will be included as a domain. The two charts at Appendix A show the population of Alexandrians 55 and over and the ethnic

and racial composition of the city. Nearly 26 percent (or 2,625) of the city's 65 plus residents are members of racial and/or ethnic minority populations.

The LGBT community in Alexandria will also be considered in the context of diversity. As they age, Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, and Transgender older people who fought the first battles for equality have been feeling that they must now hide their identities to survive. An age-friendly City of Alexandria will insure that its older LGBT citizens will not be isolated and afraid to ask for help. Work toward this goal will include advocating for their rights and fostering greater understanding of LGBT aging in all our communities, especially in nursing homes and assisted living

Nearly 54% of those who speak other than English as their native tongue report that they do not speak English "very well." (See **first chart on page B of the appendix.**) For those who do not speak English very well, access to services can be a significant obstacle. The Alexandria Council of Human Service Organization's (ACHSO) 2015 report, *Meeting Today's Needs, a Needs Assessment of the Alexandria Human Services System*, identified the need for improved dissemination of information to immigrant communities about services. The report states that focus groups concluded that the health of immigrants can be compromised because, "Language and cultural barriers keep people from accessing services or even getting information about available services." (ACHSO Report)

The National Institutes of Health describes the conundrum faced by communities that seek to accommodate the needs of minorities. It states that, "Life expectancy at older ages has increased significantly over the past 25 years, but unacceptable disparities continue to exist in terms of disease burden and lifespan among racial and ethnic groups in the United States...Economic circumstances can determine whether an individual can afford health care and proper nutrition from early life into old age. Individual and family financial resources and health insurance can determine whether an older adult enters a nursing home or stays at home to be cared for by family and friends". <https://www.nia.nih.gov/about/living-long-well-21st-century-strategic-directions-research-aging>

A variety of obstacles can cause many minorities to live less healthy and fulfilling lives. These can include health disparities, lack of affordable and appropriate housing, lesser opportunities for economic security and work, discrimination, and for some the absence of financial literacy, sound nutrition, and for immigrants, difficulties with language.

In Alexandria, the Division of Aging and Adult Services is cognizant of the challenges of serving those who have trouble understanding English. Three staff members are fluent in Spanish, one is fluent in Amharic and one speaks Korean. The city also has a contract with the AT&T Language Line to provide translation services over the phone. Other units in the Department of Community and Human Services also focus on the needs of Alexandria's diverse population.

Poverty and Diversity

As can be determined from the graph, “Household Income for Householder 65 Years or Older by Race/Ethnicity—Actual Number”, on **Page B of the appendix and a second graph on page C** that indicates percentages of household income by race and ethnicity, nearly one-quarter of householders 65 years or older have incomes below \$30,000. While the federal poverty level for 2016 has been established as \$11,770 for one person, with increments of \$4,160 for each additional resident, the median income for a family of four within the region is \$109,200. As the cost of housing has increased so significantly, as have other costs, the federal poverty level does not reflect the stark reality of the costs for those with lower and moderate incomes in Alexandria.

Of those 55 and over in Alexandria, 2002 live in poverty. The Household Income graphs by race and ethnicity, however, do not describe the deficiencies in income that challenge the livelihoods of many Alexandrians. The cost of living in the city can be staggering, especially for those whose health expenditures are very high. It is important to note that, while the Age-Friendly Plan will give significant attention to the needs of lower-income, aging African American and immigrant residents, white residents (particularly women living alone) with low incomes are the larger group, and their needs must be taken into account in the plan.

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Alexandria’s Complete Streets Plan is an invaluable asset in promoting safe access to the city’s public areas, the availability of appropriate amenities, such as benches and shelters at bus stops, and the security of pedestrians as they move about the city. To achieve a more age-friendly community, the city must take additional steps. Alexandria has an abundance of green spaces, but many parks are not accessible for those with physical limitations.

In 2015, Dr. Dan Kulund, an orthopedic surgeon and member of the Alexandria Commission on Aging, assessed each of the six large public parks and 16 of the smaller neighborhood parks to determine recreation potential for older residents. Walking through them was invaluable for developing recommendations about each one and should lead to improvements for older adults and others who go to the parks. He completed a review of a large satellite photograph of each park to assess safe and easy access and the presence of suitable amenities, such as walking paths, benches, restrooms and adequate lighting. He followed the assessment with discussions with city park planners to advocate for age-friendly amenities.

Currently, the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities is conducting an audit to determine the ranking of priorities (those that need more immediate attention) for park safety and accessibility. In addition to the audit, the department is working with a graduate student at Virginia Tech, who is writing her thesis on improving access to public space, particularly for aging populations. The Commission on Aging will be working with the intern and staff.

For the Age-Friendly Community Plan: The Complete Streets coordinator and the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities will continue to assess and improve access to parks and public buildings as a goal for participation in the Age-friendly Community Network. The Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities will also be evaluating the need for

benches, exercise equipment for adults and other amenities. The city will also increase outreach to older residents to encourage their use of the many city parks.

Transportation

Alexandrians have access to a robust system of public transportation that includes the subway, two bus systems, and paratransit. Discounted taxi rides, through Senior Taxi, are available to those with lower incomes. Efforts are also underway to conduct travel training for older residents of the city. Admittedly, Alexandria scores low on the AARP Livability Index for the traffic congestion that characterizes the metropolitan area, but the number of players essential to solving that problem far exceeds the capacity of the city's leaders to resolve singlehandedly.

To enhance age-friendliness, bus stops and shelters should be assessed for accessibility, required repairs, cleanliness, and for adequate seating and shelter. An additional and important goal would be to provide more complete and accessible information about routes, schedules and special needs facilities. City residents are currently developing a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, and the Commission on Aging is reviewing it as it is developed to make sure it is an age-friendly plan. Its execution will be a major focus for Alexandria's participation in the AARP Age-Friendly Community Network.

The city's foresight in hiring a Complete Streets coordinator has supported the focus on a livable community for all ages. The coordinator is currently developing measurable goals and indicators of achievement that will provide the foundation for making Alexandria an Age-Friendly City. The Commission on Aging and Division of Aging and Adult Services will collaborate with the coordinator and others in the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services and will monitor and support Complete Street goals.

For the Age-Friendly Community Plan: The Complete Streets coordinator has established the following goals relevant to livability for all residents:

- Provide accessible transit stops and Metro rail stations to enhance mobility independence for users of all ages and abilities.
- Provide schedules, and related transit-user information, including maps, in a format that is accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities, older transit riders and those in minority and immigrant communities.
- Where possible, assure that access to alternative transport service is available where public transport is unavailable.
- Increase communication about eligibility for paratransit.
- Assure that roadways and sidewalks are well designed and free of obstructions for pedestrians.
- Increase attention to pedestrian safety with education and outreach efforts.

Housing

Alexandria has many programs that help those with lower incomes stay in their homes and community as they age (though as described below, serious deficiencies in affordable and accessible housing are a great concern, as is the lack of affordable assisted living).

The Alexandria Office of Housing (Housing) is committed to providing affordable housing in the city and oversees many of the programs that provide support to renters and homeowners. In 2013 the City approved a Housing Master Plan (HMP) that provides a roadmap to guide future affordable housing production and preservation efforts, including a target to achieve “new affordability in 2,000 units by 2025.” Housing works closely with the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority (ARHA), which is responsible for public housing and administers the Housing Choice Voucher Program in the City.

The City provides many programs that make housing more affordable. These programs include:

- Real Estate Tax Relief and Assistance Program for Elderly and Disabled Persons;
- Rent Relief Program;
- Home Rehabilitation Loan Program;
- Homeownership Loan Program (down payment and closing cost assistance up to \$50,000);
- Affordable Rental Housing Development and Preservation (loans to developers to create committed affordable units);
- Rental Accessibility Modification Program (RAMP);
- Rent or Mortgage Assistance to prevent homelessness, as well as emergency shelter;
- Affordable Rental and Ownership Set-Aside Unit, including 8+ currently pledged in upcoming memory care and assisted living projects;
- Utility, Heating and Cooling Assistance Programs;
- Weatherization and Home Safety;
- Support for Rebuilding Together Alexandria;
- The city also has assisted living (14 units) and nursing home beds (19) in Birmingham Green for income-eligible residents, but it is 40 miles from the city;
- Counseling services including mortgage default and delinquency counseling.

The total number of subsidized units for independent living for older adults is 614. Income-eligible seniors are welcome in other non-senior committed affordable housing developments, of course. ARHA’s senior public housing building serves older residents in 170 units, as well as in some of the other 1,000 units in its portfolio, and a significant number of Housing Choice Vouchers have been provided to older and/or disabled adults. The waiting lists for vouchers and for public housing are very long.

Budget cuts in federal and state funding have diminished Alexandria’s financial resources for expanding the availability of affordable, accessible housing for lower-income seniors. Steadily climbing rental rates since 2000 have caused a devastating loss in market-affordable housing previously available to lower-income Alexandrians (around 12,000 market-affordable units due to substantial rent increases). In addition, it has been estimated that the city will require an

additional 5,687 affordable units to meet current and projected needs. AARP's Livability Index score for Alexandria's housing reflects the city's inadequate supply of affordable housing, as does its low ranking for accessible housing. While affordability is a challenge, the City does offer excellent access to public transportation and a host of accessible new construction, multifamily properties with access to community amenities, creating opportunities for seniors to live fully and independently.

As a result of survey and qualitative research, the Alexandria Council of Human Services Organizations (ACHSO), which represents several city agencies and 51 non-profit organizations, has made affordable housing its first priority. Its 2015 report, "Meeting Needs Today: A Needs Assessment of the Alexandria Human Services System," states the problem in stark terms, arguing that, "The lack of affordable housing is the ground zero of need in the city, influencing every other issue that service providers work to address." Page 7, ACHSO Report

Also important is the possibility that zoning changes in Alexandria, including some recommended to be implemented in the HMP, may increase the availability of affordable housing. The current vice mayor has proposed that the City Council should evaluate its current zoning requirements to leverage more affordable housing. Jason Furman, Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors, has suggested that, on a national basis, "Our limitations on development have driven the cost of housing to unaffordable levels, thus exacerbating income inequality."

Many groups in Alexandria share the goals of the Commission on Aging and, during a recent campaign for Mayor and City Council, affordable housing became a priority issue. The COA will advocate for affordable and accessible housing with the Mayor and City Council and work with the Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance and others to educate residents and urge city leaders to move forward on creating more affordable—and accessible—housing and affordable assisted living. Development of affordable assisted living is one of the priorities of both the Housing Master Plan and the City's Strategic Plan on Aging, and an interdepartmental staff group is currently working to identify potential sites for this project.

For the Age-Friendly Community Plan: The Commission on Aging has defined its goals, based on consultation with the city's Office of Housing and discussions with the Department of Planning and Zoning. Its goals complement those of the Office of Housing and the city's Master Housing Plan, and its goal for NORCs is shared with that of the Division of Aging and Adult Services. The Commission on Aging Housing Committee has assigned members to participate in citizen meetings and charrettes on important zoning and development changes in the city. The Commission on Aging has a City Council-appointed representative on the Housing Affordability Advisory Committee.

The goals that will be pursued for the Age-Friendly Plan include:

- Actively support the increase, on an annual basis, of Alexandria's net stock of affordable housing and assisted living units by working with those groups and individuals that have major influence over the creation and loss of such housing in our community.

- Work with DAAS and others to educate residents and managers of Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs) about public and private supportive services that can be provided onsite, enabling residents to live longer in their present homes.
- Work with key organizations and individuals to incorporate “housing for a lifetime” features in both new housing and redevelopment of existing housing,
- Advocate for and track the impact of City Tax and Rent Relief Programs for Elderly and Disabled on these groups, specifically, monitor impact of program changes on resident participation and advocate for changes, as indicated.
- Pay particular attention to disseminating information to minorities in all outreach/marketing about the city’s housing programs and services.
- Work with the Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance to educate Alexandria’s residents about the need for affordable, accessible housing.

Social Participation/Respect and Social Inclusion/Communication and Information

For the Age-Friendly Plan, Alexandria would combine the three domains, Social Participation, Respect and Social Inclusion and Communication and Information. Carefully targeted communication and information, often provided by a volunteer or city staff within diverse communities, could increase social participation among older residents and enhance the respect and inclusion accorded them.

Social Participation: AARP’s Livability Index gives the city high marks for access to cultural, arts and entertainment activities, which are important to social participation. The limitation for lower and moderate-income residents is the cost of some events, such as the theater, concerts, major sports events, movies and other forms of entertainment and the arts. The city does however, offer the less expensive Little Theater of Alexandria, no-cost access to the Torpedo Factory with its many artists, historical buildings, waterfront activities and many other lower-cost venues and events. For those for whom the English language poses difficulties, access to in-language arts and culture can be severely constrained. Spanish-speaking theaters are available in nearby Arlington and Washington, DC. Alexandria hosts many festivals and parades, to which all are invited free of cost, some of which celebrate the diversity of its residents.

Two senior centers in the city attract a very diverse clientele. English as a Second Language classes are widely available. The recreation centers offer a range of activities for older residents, though the Commission on Aging supports an increase in types of activities that support physical health. Many specialized programs are offered, to include art classes, a bridge club, Del Ray Seniors (an Alexandria neighborhood), jewelry creation to improve psychomotor skills, a knitting club, line dancing, yoga, a pinochle club, a senior fellowship monthly luncheon, strength and conditioning, table tennis, and 55+ game nights.

Respect and Social Inclusion: Social participation is clearly relevant to respect and social inclusion, which are critically important for a city as diverse as Alexandria. The Commission on Aging has been seeking additional members and committee members who represent minority communities. Many Alexandrians serving on commissions that advise the Department of

Community and Human Services represent diverse communities. These commission members can be very helpful in identifying the most useful ways in which the city can communicate with its older residents in diverse communities.

At this time, the Commission's Diversity Committee is planning to hold brainstorming sessions with African American church members. These sessions will be the beginning of the effort to incorporate African American and immigrant perspectives more comprehensively into the development of the Age-Friendly Plan. The Diversity Committee will seek collaboration with the many non-profits in the city and the Department of Community and Human Services to determine the most productive role the city and many organizations can play in increasing respect for and social inclusion of older adults in communities that may be better served by the city if relationships and communication with them are significantly enhanced.

The Alexandria Council of Human Services Organizations has delved into the needs of minority populations, and reports that local non-profits in the city "focus on vulnerable populations; serve as a repository (quantitatively and anecdotally) for information about need and how well the City is meeting those needs; educate the public about the needs of vulnerable populations and create platforms (through giving, volunteering, etc.) for community participation in improvement efforts; and help the city make good on its goal of being inclusive even for individuals, families and communities with multiple challenges. The Council's members will be invaluable contributors to development of the age-friendly plan. (Page 10 ACHSO Report)

For the Age-Friendly Community Plan: Respect and social inclusion are, in many respects, the core priority of the Age-Friendly Community Plan. The plan will include development of a communications strategy that supports efforts to enhance outreach to all older adults as well as communications specially designed for diverse audiences.

The Commission on Aging, in an ambitious strategy for the Age-Friendly Plan, will develop a "community ambassador program". The program will focus on socially and economically disadvantaged residents, though it will also seek ambassadors in all of Alexandria's neighborhoods, where many residents could benefit from contact with well-informed neighbors who can provide information about the city's services for older and disabled adults. The "ambassadors" will be educated about important aging issues and will be asked to report older resident concerns to the Commission and the Division of Aging and Adult Services and disseminate information to the communities in which they live or serve.

The community ambassadors serving in immigrant communities will be asked to engage families, as their younger members may be able to inform older members about the services available in Alexandria and overcome their distrust or resistance to accepting help. This intergenerational approach can be useful to all family members, who can be encouraged and supported in participating more broadly in the community.

Its overarching goal would be increased participation by older adults in programs, services and activities that address the needs of diverse constituencies, i.e., African Americans, immigrants, LGBT adults, those with disabilities, English language learners, older women living alone.

Civic Participation and Employment

Alexandria has a well-deserved reputation for civic participation (as the AARP Livability Index score reflects), and older residents are well-represented in a variety of volunteer activities, including those that support aging and disabled persons who need assistance. Alexandria residents can be involved in over 70 boards and commissions, and many non-profit organizations in the city are sustained by volunteers, including older volunteers. It is important, however, that older adults are actively recruited as volunteers and their assignments comport with their skills and experience if that is their choice. AARP Virginia has been very helpful in recruiting its members as volunteers, and has been successful in placing them in Alexandria's non-profit organizations. Volunteer Alexandria also serves as a resource for matching volunteers with appropriate assignments. Volunteer opportunities are available that serve older adults with the non-profit Senior Services of Alexandria and At Home in Alexandria (the village).

The Livability Index score for employment is less satisfactory. To bolster its efforts on behalf of employment of older residents, the Commission on Aging has established an Economic Development Committee, which includes a representative from the City's Workforce Development Center (WDC). The WDC has added a "Seniors' Corner" to its web page, which has been designed to promote news and activities related to training and employment for seniors. The WDC also offers employment training in use of computers, creation of an effective resume, and preparation for an interview. An innovative approach that could be considered is creation of a Senior Intern program with local businesses, non-profits and city government. Older interns could be very effective, enabling them to use their skills from previous careers to enhance progress on organizations' missions and to serve as mentors to younger employees. Unfortunately, WDC has reported that, following the elimination of the staff position that worked with older workers in FY 2015, there has been a 66% decrease in the number of age 50+ job seekers served, and a 77% decrease in the number of age 50+ job seekers who were placed in employment. The employment of older residents, especially those with low incomes, needs a significant boost.

The Commission on Aging is also focused on older residents as consumers. The Economic Development Committee has worked with businesses to encourage them to consider the importance of older residents to their success. The Committee has worked with the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce to create an on-line survey of Chamber members to determine if they offer special incentives to older clients; contacted local business associations (Del Ray, West End, Old Town) to determine if their members offer special incentives to their older customers; and contacted local grocery stores to determine what special incentives they offer for senior clients. These efforts revealed that there are very limited special incentives offered by local businesses.

The Commission is working with Senior Services of Alexandria and At Home in Alexandria to develop a special program for businesses to further promote an age-friendly community where older residents can shop, dine and obtain services locally. The Commission is proposing the following: discounts for senior diners during off peak restaurant hours; accommodation for the interests and lifestyles of this population; lines of business, services and products that cater to the specific needs of seniors; and designation of specific shopping days for discounts.

For the Age-Friendly Community Plan:

- Support increased availability of assistance for older job seekers through the Work Development Center;
- Work with businesses to promote special programs for older consumers.

Community and Health Services

Alexandria is generally supportive of health and human services, and has been sensitive to the impact of budget reductions. The AARP Livability Index gives the city a 78 percent rating in health, including access to parks and recreation facilities.

As Alexandria's Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria points out, however, the following may contribute to health inequities among Alexandrians: geography and access to transportation; housing type and availability; income; social isolation; and stigmatization of differences. The Partnership has determined that access to care for all residents of Alexandria is one of its priorities. The Partnership has also chosen as a priority "Aging Well in Place," and endorses the current Strategic Plan on Aging, with the specific goal of enabling "older adults to age in their place of choice with appropriate services and supports." These two priorities of the Partnership are shared with the Commission on Aging and DAAS and focus attention on those communities most likely to suffer health inequities: minorities and immigrants.

The Alexandria Health Department and Neighborhood Health provide health services to the uninsured on a sliding scale. However, a very significant problem for older Alexandrians, and others as well, is the very restrictive eligibility in Virginia for Medicaid, and for other health supports. **See Appendix "Income and Asset Guidelines for Benefits Programs, Page D.** Despite intense efforts by the Governor, AARP, the city and other jurisdictions in Virginia, the Virginia Chamber of Commerce, the Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association, the Northern Virginia Aging Network and other organizations, the General Assembly has steadfastly rejected acceptance of Medicaid expansion. As a result, many people go without services and the city, state and the INOVA Alexandria Hospital cover the cost of services that would otherwise be covered by Medicaid.

Of special concern to the Commission on Aging and the Division of Aging and Adult Services is the quality and affordability of nursing homes and assisted living facilities in Alexandria and nearby communities. Complaints about the quality of some facilities have been reported. The Commission and DAAS, which are represented in the Northern Virginia Aging Network, supported its proposal for the 2016 session of the Virginia General Assembly to substantially increase funding of the ombudsman program in the state, where as many as 25 additional ombudsmen are needed. The ombudsmen currently are over-burdened, and the Commission is planning to support the Northern Virginia Ombudsman program by advocating for improvements in care. The Commission also, as noted above, is committed to the creation of an affordable assisted living facility in Alexandria.

In Alexandria the following services are available for older adults and adults with disabilities though many have eligibility requirements:

- Homemaker & Personal Care Program;

- Medicaid Waiver Personal Care for people who would otherwise be in nursing homes;
- Adult Day Care;
- An array of transportation services, to include grocery shopping;
- Meals on Wheels, by Senior Services of Alexandria (SSA);
- Liquid supplements;
- Case management and counseling services, which include two DAAS social workers available for Ladrey, Annie B. Rose, and Claridge House three low-income independent living apartment buildings for older adults;
- Adult Protective Services;
- Call Reassurance Program (SSA);
- Friendly Visitor Program (SSA);
- Meals on Wheels;
- Grocery Shopping and Delivery Program (SSA);
- Also available are screenings for nursing homes (Medicaid), an assisted living auxiliary grant (Virginia) and Medicaid waivers for persons who would otherwise be in a nursing home;
- Mental health counseling and treatment and mental health capacity assessments are offered by DAAS, as are Link to Life, MedicAlert +Alzheimer’s Association Safe Return, and Project Lifesaver;
- Legal services and multicultural services are also available in the city; and.
- PACE, offered by INOVA Hospital;
- Senior Taxi.

For the Age-Friendly Community Plan:

- The Division of Aging and Adult Services identified the need for a locally funded nursing case management program, which would serve the buildings where all residents meet income guidelines as well as other residents in the city who qualify. Many clients have multiple chronic conditions and take multiple meds. Nurses could make home visits and provide nursing assessments and consultations, administer and/or set up medications, provide education to clients and their caregivers. This service is the “missing link” in community-based long-term care. The Commission on Aging supports this and will advocate for it as needed.
- The epidemiologist in the Alexandria Health Department has undertaken research on health disparities in the city. The Commission on Aging and DAAS will review the results with the epidemiologist, the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria, and others working in health to identify additional methods for reaching older adults who may be eligible for additional health interventions.
- Increased efforts are needed to inform minority and immigrant families about health and other services available to them. The Commission could work with DAAS and other organizations to develop opportunities for intergenerational events or programs to provide this and other information important to older adults and all family members. Working with Alexandria’s Public School system could be one possibility.
- The Division of Aging and Adult Services is the Aging and Disability Resource Center in Alexandria and serves older adults and adults with disabilities. The Commission on

Aging works closely with the Alexandria Commission on Persons with Disabilities, the Human Rights Commission, and the Human Rights staff, and will continue working with DAAS, the Human Rights staff and the two commissions to identify the many areas where collaboration will solve problems.

- DAAS and the Commission on Aging are beginning to participate in Dementia Friendly America and will use its collaborative approach to planning to enhance the capacity of Alexandria to accommodate those with dementia. As caregiving is such an important priority for AARP, the Virginia state office will be supporting this effort through its Prepare to Care caregiving campaign, with which the Commission is heavily involved. AARP, the Area Agencies on Aging and other aging advocates in Northern Virginia plan the Northern Virginia Caregiving Conference each year and will highlight the work of Dementia Friendly America. Alexandria has been one of the chief co-sponsors of the Conference for the past 15+ years. That conference always has an emphasis on dementia because of its significant toll on caregivers.
- The Commission on Aging will work with AARP and others to inform and support caregivers, to include those in diverse communities who may need assistance in understanding what is available to older family members.
- DAAS and the Commission are working with the Office of Emergency Management to assure the safety of older residents in cases of emergency.

Demographic Profile
Older Adults -- Alexandria¹

	Total	Male	Female	Total
Total population	143,684	69,448	74,236	143,684
55 to 59 years	8,477	3,750	4,677	8,427
60 to 64 years	7,328	3,472	3,935	7,407
65 to 69 years	5,173	2,361	2,747	5,108
70 to 74 years	2,730	1,250	1,485	2,735
75 to 79 years	2,299	833	1,410	2,244
80 to 84 years	1,581	625	1,039	1,664
85 years and over	1,724	694	1,039	1,734

	Male	Female	Total
AGE			
55+	12,987	16,332	29,319
60 +	9,237	11,655	20,892
65 +	5,764	7,721	13,485
75 +	2,153	3,489	5,642
85+	694	1,039	1,734

Race/Ethnicity, Age 65 and over

White Alone	10,032	74.5%
Black or African American Alone	2,321	17.2%
American Indian/Alaska Native Alone	40	0.3%
Asian Alone	699	5.2%
Some Other Race Alone	174	1.3%
Two or More Races	207	1.5%
Total	13,473	100.0%
Hispanic (of any race)	831	6.2%

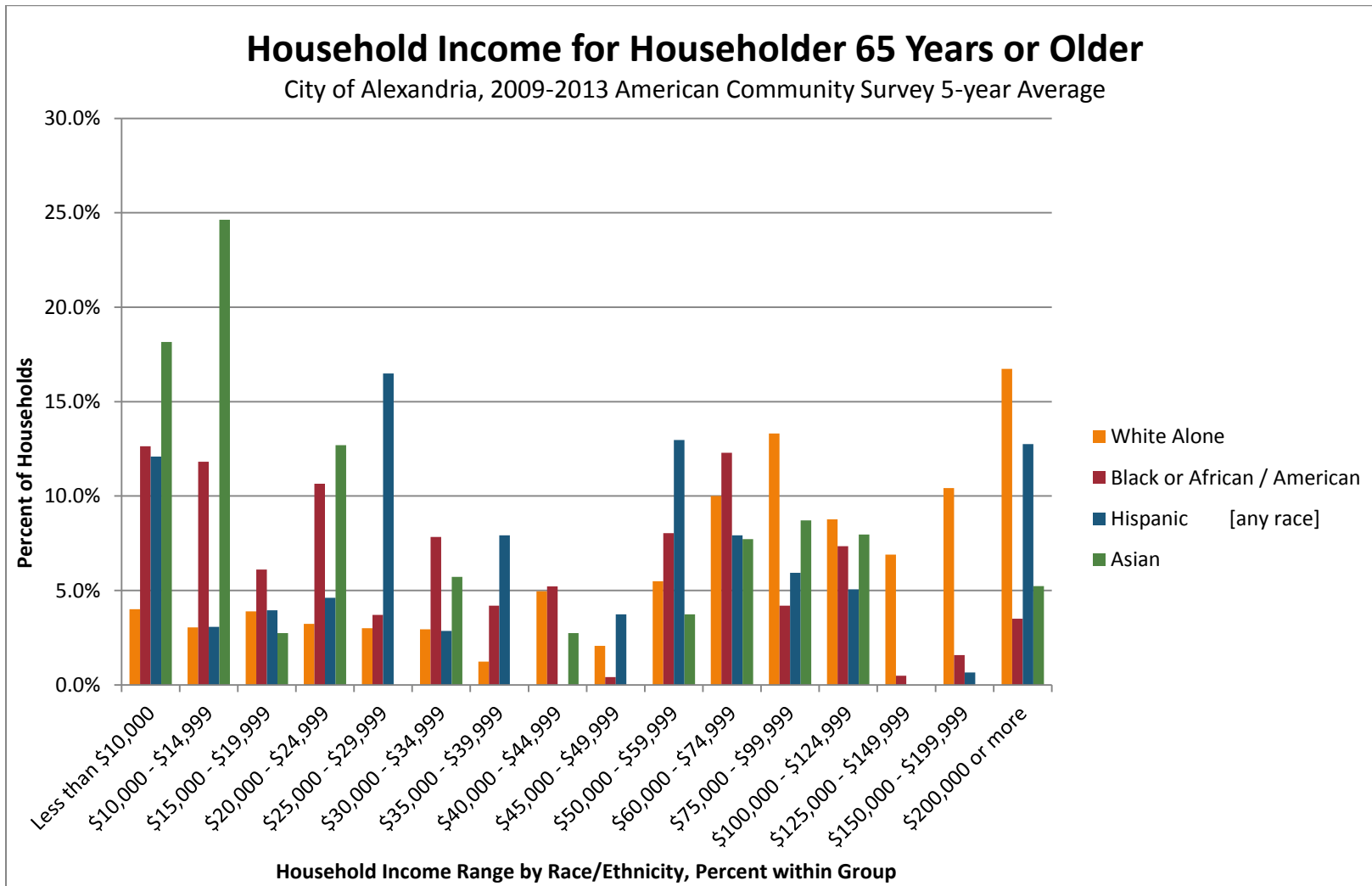
¹ American Community Survey, 2009-2013, 5 Year Estimate

English Speaking

	Speak English "very well"	Speak English less than "very well"	Speak English "very well"	Speak English less than "very well"
Total				

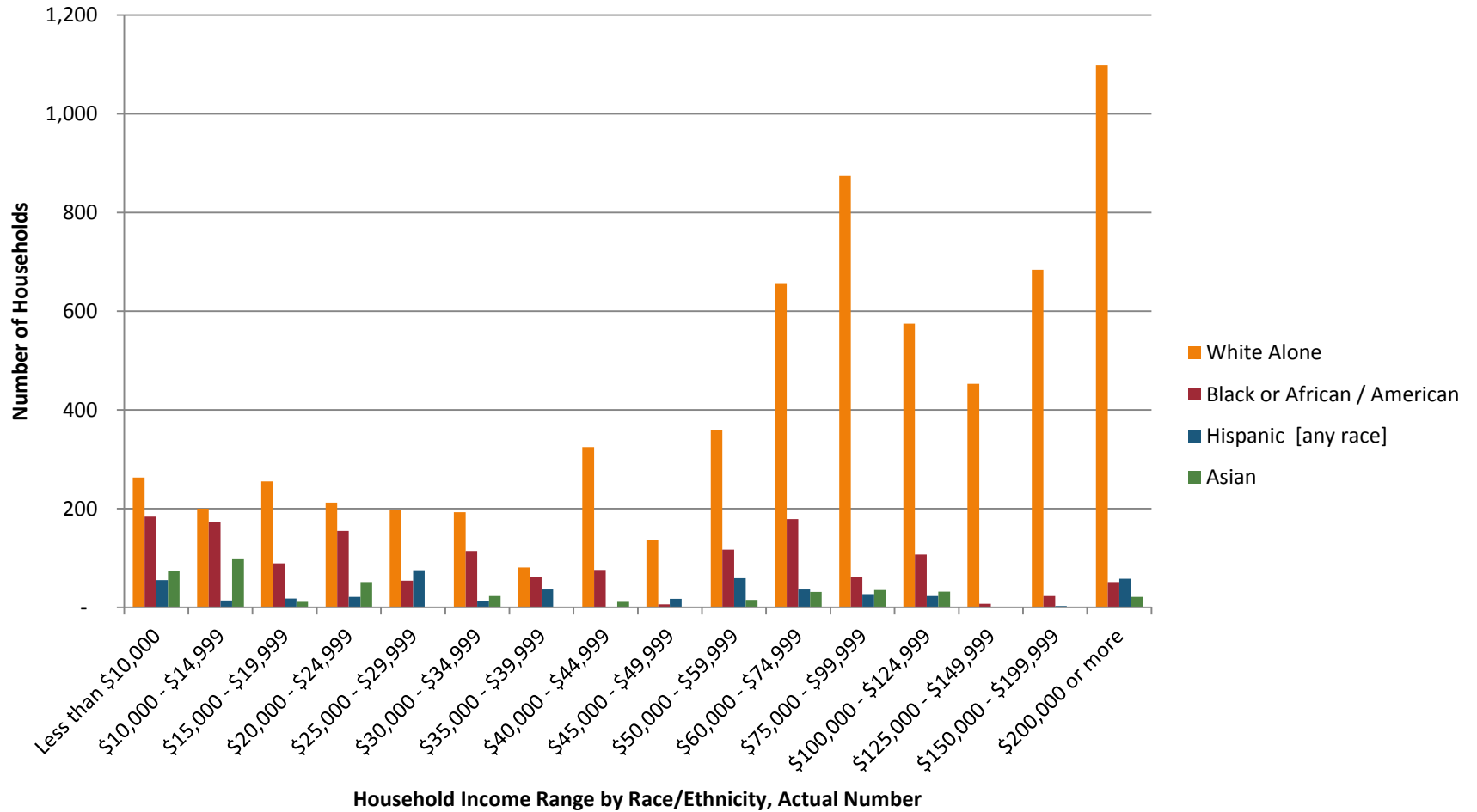
65 years and over

Spanish or Spanish Creole	727	258	469	35.5%	64.5%
Other Indo-European languages	851	429	422	50.4%	49.6%
Asian and Pacific Island languages	476	206	270	43.3%	56.7%
Other languages	571	318	253	55.7%	44.3%
Total	2,625	1,211	1,414		



Household Income for Householder 65 Years or Older

City of Alexandria, 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-year Average



Income and Asset Guidelines for Benefits Programs				
PROGRAM	GROSS MONTHLY INCOME		ASSETS	
	1 person	2 person		
Auxiliary Grant {assisted living} [12-17-15]	No Va: \$1,484; \$1,402 to provider	N/A	\$2,000 Monthly Personal Needs Allowance: \$82	
Dental Clinic [09-03-15]	\$1,962	\$2,655	\$2,000	
SNAP [09-14-2015]	\$1,265	\$1,705	\$3,250 for households with a member age 60 and over	
Fuel Assistance [09-14-2015]	\$1,265	\$1,705	No limit	
Rent Relief [9-14-15]	\$2,138 +\$625 disregard	\$2,138 +\$625 disregard	\$75,000	
SSI [1-1-16]	\$733	\$1,100	\$2,000	\$3,000
Full Medicaid (80% of Fed'l Poverty)	\$785	\$1,062	\$2,000	\$3,000 Burial set-aside: \$3500/hshld mbr. Irrevocable burial trust- no limit
QMB {Medicaid} [2-19-15]	\$981 +\$20 income disregard	\$1,328 +\$20 income disregard	1 person	2 person
SLMB {Medicaid} [2-19-15]	\$1,177 +\$20 income disregard	\$1,593 +\$20 income disregard	\$7,280	\$10,930
QI {Medicaid} [2-19-15]	\$1,324 +\$20 income disregard	\$1,792 +\$20 income disregard	1 person	2 person
Extra Help {Part D LIS} [2-19-15]	\$1,471	\$1,991	\$7,280	\$10,930
Community Based Care {Medicaid Waiver} [2-19-15]	\$2,199		\$13,440	\$26,860
Section 8 Housing [3/18/15]	\$3,188	\$3,642	\$2,000 Burial set-aside-\$3500/household member Irrevocable burial trust-no limit	

