Crater Area Coalition on Homelessness Coordinated Community Plan to Prevent and End Youth and Young Adult Homelessness

Acknowledgements

The Crater Area Coalition on Homelessness Coordinated Community Plan is a collaborative community-wide effort made possible by the dedicated stakeholders of the Crater Area Coalition on Homelessness Local Planning Group. The development of the CCP was led by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development on behalf of the Virginia Balance of State Continuum of Care for the target community, Crater Area Coalition on Homelessness Local Planning Group. The CACH CCP is the result of the Crater Area Youth Action Board, the Core Planning Team, and the many stakeholders who dedicated their time, knowledge, experience, and passion to the development of this plan.

We are humbled and grateful for the unwavering support of the Crater Area Youth Action Board, the Core Planning Team, and our ICF technical assistance providers.

To each member of the CAYAB, a sincere thank you for your continued partnership, shared knowledge, and wealth of experience provided as the focal points of the CCP. Thank you for your commitment to the YHDP work and for your continued support in the efforts to prevent and end youth homlessness in the Crater Region.

A sincere thank you to the members of the Core Planning Team for your dedication and support in the development of the CCP.

The CACH CCP is dedicated to the youth and young adults experiencing housing instability or homlessness in the CACH LPG. Let us continue to strive for a future where no one is without a place to call home.

Table of Contents

Introduction

The Crater Area Coalition on Homelessness Coordinated Community Plan (CCP) is a blueprint intended to set the tone for the work dedicated to preventing and ending youth and young adult (YYA) homelessness in the Crater Area Coalition on Homelessness (CACH) Local Planning Group (LPG) also known as the Crater Region. The CACH LPG is composed of 9 localities, Colonial Heights, Emporia, Dinwiddie, Greensville, Hopewell, Petersburg, Prince George, Surry, and Sussex.

The CACH LPG is one of 12 communities that make up the Virginia Balance of State Continuum of Care (VA BoS CoC). The ultimate goal of the Coordinated Community Plan (CCP) is to build a framework for youth-specific services in the CACH LPG that can be replicated across the remaining 11 local planning groups in the VA BoS CoC.

This CCP has been designed to meet the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requirement for the Youth Homelssness Demonstration Program (YHDP). HUD awarded the VA BoS CoC $1.6 million in YHDP funding to be used over 2 years to support the CACH LPG in the development and implementation of a comprehensive coordinated community plan to prevent and end youth homelessness.

The CACH CCP and the work that follows are supported by numerous community partners, including homeless services agencies, state government, public child welfare agencies, institutions of higher education, early childhood development agencies, and our mental health, health, and substance abuse agencies. Youth and young adults with lived experience provided their expertise and experience and worked alongside system partners in the development of the Crater Area Coalition on Homelessness Coordinated Community Plan.

Commonly Used Terms

- BIPOC: Black, Indigenous, People of Color
- BOS: Balance of State
  - See VA BoS CoC
- CACH LPG: Crater Area Coalition on Homelessness Local Planning Group
  - The CACH LPG is the target community for the CACH CCP and is comprised of 8 localities: Dinwiddie, Emporia, Colonial Heights, Hopewell, Petersburg, Prince George, Surrey, and Sussex
- CAYAB: Crater Area Youth Action Board
- CCP: Coordinated Community Plan
- CM: Case Manager
- CoC: Continuum of Care
- CQI: Continuous Quality Improvement
- DHCD: Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development
- HMIS: Homelessness Management Information System
- HUD: United States Department of Housing and Urban Development
- LGBTQIA+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer/ Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, plus
- PiT: Point in Time Count
- PSH: Permanent Supportive Housing
- RRH: Rapid Re-housing
- USICH: United States Interagency Council on Homelessness
  - Federal Agency whose mission is to prevent and end homelessness in America
- VA BoS CoC: Virginia Balance of State Continuum of Care
  - The VA BoS CoC is the Collaborative Applicant for YHDP. The VA BoS CoC is composed of 12 local planning groups, including the CACH LPG.
- YHDP: Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program
- YYA: Youth and Young Adults
  - Youth: any individual under the age of 18
 - Young Adult (YA): any individual between the age of 18 and 24

Mission & Vision

The Crater Area YHDP Collective includes the Crater Area Youth Action Board (CAYAB), the Core Planning Team, and the various youth stakeholders involved in the development and implementation of the Crater Area Coalition on Homelessness Coordinated Community Plan. The Crater Area YHDP Collective envisions a Commonwealth where youth and young adult homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring. To that end, the Crater Area YHDP Collective aims to functionally end youth homelessness in the Crater Area Coalition on Homelessness Local Planning Group (CACH LPG) through youth-led and youth-supported, collaborative, and cross- sector efforts. It is our aim to develop a system that is accessible 24/7, trauma- informed, equitable, youth-affirming, and housing first.

In order to achieve this vision, the Crater Area YHDP Collective will

- ❖ Uplift and center youth voices at all stages of project and system development by supporting the Crater Area Youth Action Board and other youth with lived experience, and
- ❖ Ensure services address the needs of vulnerable populations, to include but not limited to, LGBTQIA+, BIPOC, pregnant/ parenting youth, and youth fleeing domestic or intimate partner violence, and
- ❖ Ensure continuous collaboration between homeless service partners, child welfare agencies, education partners, and various other youth stakeholders to ensure youth are connected to housing upon exit from any system within the CACH LPG, and
- ❖ Ensure prevention, diversion, and emergency shelter services are prioritized to ensure no youth experiences unsheltered homelessness, and
- ❖ Immediately assess the needs of youth and young adults accessing the system and provide them with individualized and youth-chosen supportive services and stable housing, and
- ❖ Continually work to gather data to paint an accurate picture of the needs of youth and young adults in the CACH LPG, and
- ❖ Remain hopeful and invested in the community's endeavors to end youth homelessness.

Statement of Need

Nationally, the lack of affordable housing units has been identified as one of the leading causes of homelessness. The National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) states[1] that, "*Across Virginia, there is a shortage of rental homes affordable and available to extremely low-income households (ELI), whose incomes are at or below the poverty guideline or 30% of their area median income (AMI). Many of these households are severely cost-burdened, spending more than half of their income on housing. Severely cost-burdened poor households are more likely than other renters to sacrifice other necessities like healthy food and healthcare to pay the rent, and to experience unstable housing situations like evictions.*" Additional Key Facts from NLIHC on the housing needs in Virginia include:

KEY FACTS

241,874 OR 22%
Renter households that are extremely low income

$28,120
Maximum income for 4-person extremely low income household (state level)

-148,720
Shortage of rental homes affordable and available for extremely low income renters

$50,767
Annual household income needed to afford a two-bedroom rental home at HUD's Fair Market Rent.

71%
Percent of extremely low income renter households with severe cost burden

In the CACH LPG, the YHDP target community of the VA BoS CoC, this is no different. In 2019, the Cameron Foundation needs assessment conducted in the localities that comprise the CACH LPG stated, the affordability of housing has been impacted by rising housing prices and costs - leading to increased home evictions. In the CACH LPG, eviction rates vary from a high rate of 17.6% in Petersburg to 4% in Sussex County (2019, Cameron Foundation). Despite the CACH LPG's implementation of critical time intervention practices, the efforts of community partners to respond to youth homelessness are hindered by the lack of affordable housing stock available in the community. Through the 2020 Multi-Family Vacancy assessment of Virginia, there is an average housing vacancy rate of 11.63% in the communities that comprise CACH LPG.

Anecdotally, YYA and community partners in the CACH LPG have identified multiple factors that contribute to a youth's experience of homelessness. In a discussion held with the Crater Area Youth Action Board (CAYAB) members, youth identified low income or loss of income as factors contributing to housing instability and homelessness. CAYAB members reported youth may get behind in rent or utility payments resulting in civil action or homelessness. Youth also report involvement with law enforcement and the criminal justice system can lead to job loss, loss of housing, and increased difficulty obtaining new housing or employment. Additionally, the youth

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[1] https://nlihc.org/housing-needs-by-state/virginia

report that for individuals nearing the age of 18 who are experiencing homelessness, strained relationships with family can lead to them being "kicked out" before they secure housing.

Additionally, the lack of youth-focused housing supports has been a contributing factor in the experience of homelessness among youth. Prior to 2017, there were limited resources that were youth-focused in their delivery of services. In 2017, the CACH LPG implemented a rapid re-housing project that focused on housing stabilization, increasing school attendance, and increasing graduation rates among students who are experiencing homelessness/housing instability. As a result of the project, in 2020 through the Virginia Housing Trust Fund - Homeless Reduction Grant (HTF-HRG) the community expanded their youth-focused housing services to provide youth-focused homeless outreach and a continuum of permanent housing interventions dedicated to serving youth. The CACH LPG will continue to expand on its youth-focused services to ensure that youth have access to safe, trauma-informed housing and are able to meet their basic needs.

Balance of State Overview

While the YHDP focuses on the Crater Area of the state, it is valuable to look at trends in youth data across the full Balance of State. Since 2019, there has been an annual increase in single adult youth, between the ages of 18-24, who are experiencing homelessness and accessing a crisis response system across the BOS.

Year	# of adult only 18-24 years who were served in the system[2]
2019	129
2020	131
2021	153

HUD's Stella P data visualization system allows the BOS to compare the flow of single adult youth as they move through the system. Stella P uses HMIS data from the annual Longitudinal Systems Analysis (LSA) report to support the BOS in planning and improving the crisis response system. The image below is a visualization from October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021.

In this visualization, we can identify a few things that help to understand the scope of youth homelessness across the Balance of State.

❖ Single Adult Youth are averaging 71 days homeless. We have seen this increase by 22 days since 2019.

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[2] Stella P Data - Homeless Data Exchange
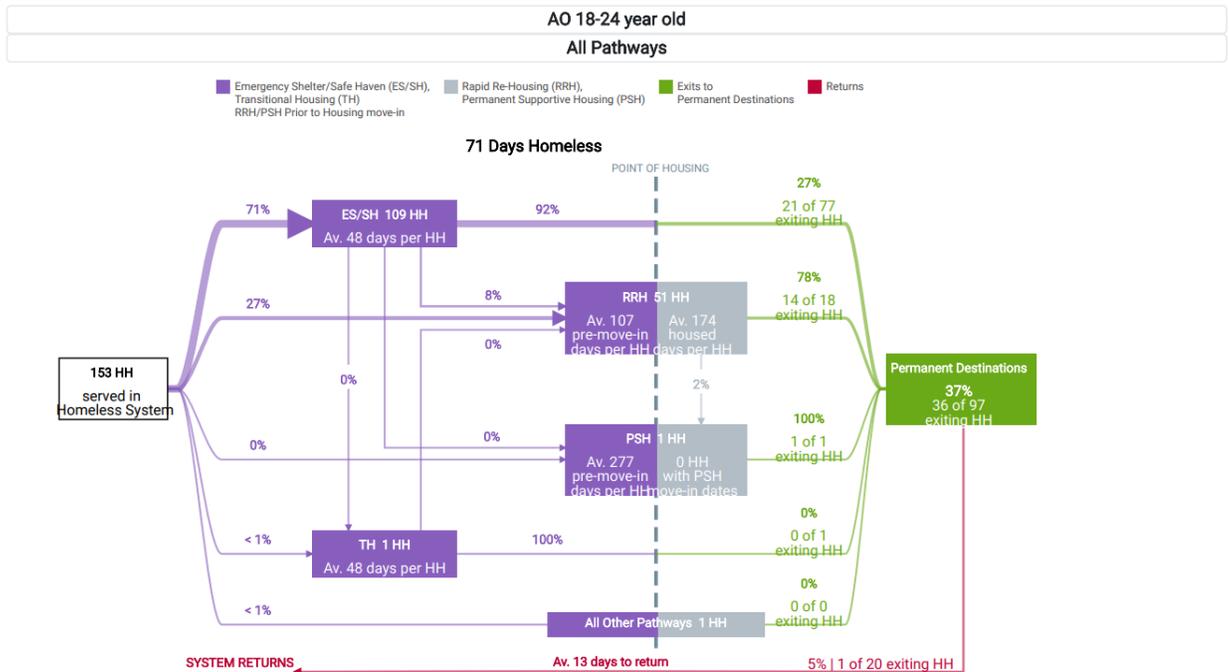
- ❖ As needs increase and resources stay the same, only 71% (109 households) of youth received emergency shelter resources in 2021, compared to 82% (106 households) in 2019.
- ❖ From 2019 to 2021, there was an increase in RRH assistance available to the communities and 35% (51 households) moved into RRH, compared to only 24% (30 households) in 2019.
- ❖ Overall, 37% of single adult youth who exited the homeless system left for permanent destinations.

Not shown in the visualization above is data on parenting youth. At this time, we do not have the ability to compare 2021 data with previous years and this is something we will continue to explore.

- ❖ 44 households were served in the homeless system, with 26% (16 households) served in shelter.
- ❖ 70% of households served moved into RRH.
- ❖ Overall, 63% of parenting youth families who exited the homeless system left for permanent destinations

Current Youth Designated Programs

CACH received the Youth Innovation grant from DHCD in 2021 to open a Youth Rapid Rehousing program and Youth Outreach program. CACH currently has one staff person serving

as the youth designated case manager and outreach worker. With this capacity, 15 Young Adult (YA) households can participate in case management at any given time. Through Youth Outreach, an additional five households can participate in specialized diversion and housing problem-solving. All CACH localities are included in youth designated outreach and case management; however, the limited capacity of a single outreach worker to cover a 9 locality region severely limits the range and frequency of outreach efforts.

The Crater area has a School Pilot Program as part of Youth Innovations. This is a Rapid Rehousing program that is currently only in Petersburg. The School Pilot Program and youth RRH are under one case manager with a current capacity of 15. The program has set a goal to increase to 20 youth for this case manager by 7/1/2022.

Enrollment
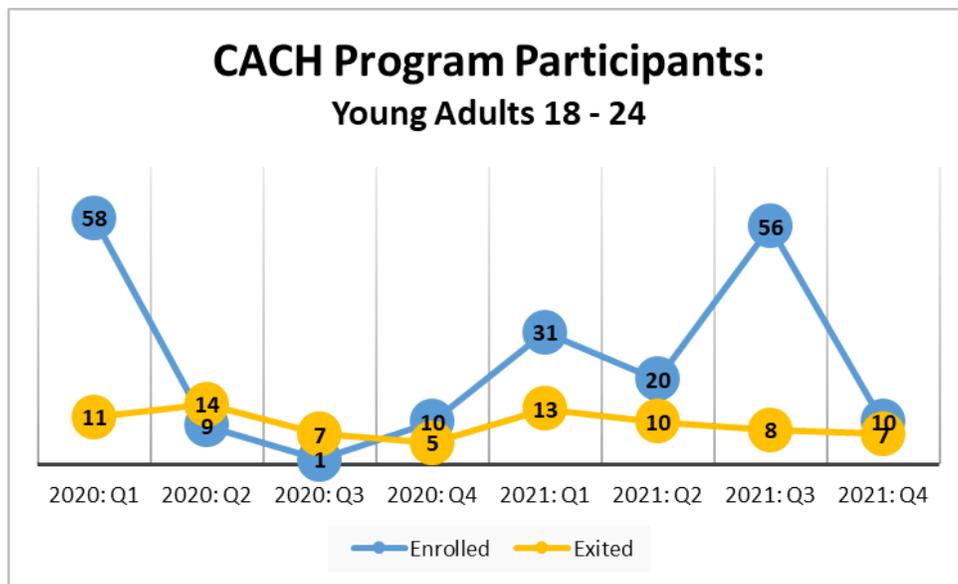
Data obtained from HMIS - March 2022

Enrollment into CACH Coordinated Entry programs can vary drastically from one quarter to the next. The youth case management capacity is limited to 15 YA participants at a time, which is insufficient to meet the needs of young adults in the Crater area. CACH strives to help participants find permanent, stable housing within 30 days of enrollment in RRH. Even if the 30-day goal could be met for every youth RRH participant,the above graph shows the number of newly enrolled young adults in need regularly exceeds the current youth RRH program capacity. Expanding outreach throughout the Crater Area will increase the number of YYA enrolling in CACH programs, requiring even larger YYA program capacities than current participation levels.

Participants Served

YA Program Participation 2019 - 2021

| Program	Year	Value
Outreach	2021	7
Outreach	2020	7
Outreach	2019	4
SSO	2021	15
SSO	2020	19
SSO	2019	39
Prevention	2021	11
Prevention	2020	4
Prevention	2019	10
Emergency Shelter	2021	3
Emergency Shelter	2020	6
Emergency Shelter	2019	5
PSH	2021	1
PSH	2019	1
RRH	2021	22
RRH	2020	8
RRH	2019	8
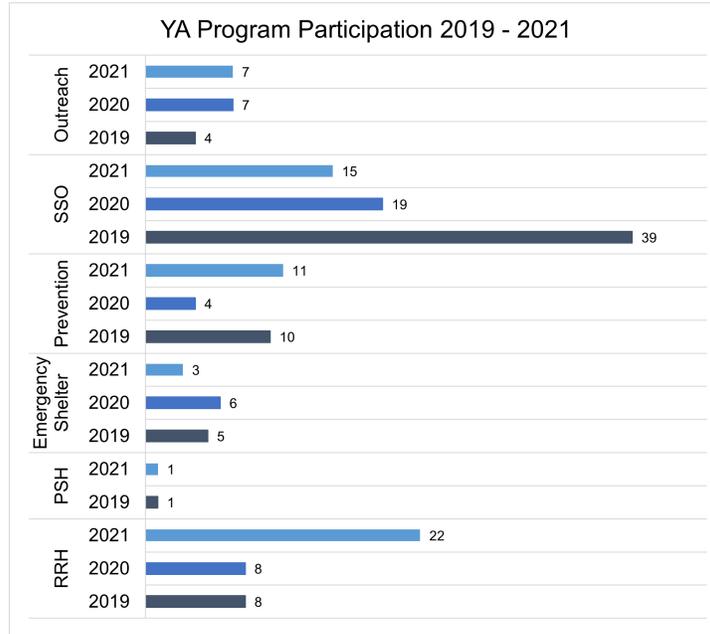
Data obtained from HMIS - March 2022

Participants can transition from one program to another or be enrolled in multiple programs. The number of participants in Rapid Rehousing programs grew quickly from 2020 to 2021, jumping from 8 to 22 participants. This increase in participants served in 2021 is due to increased capacity through the Youth Innovations grant to hire a Youth Outreach and Case Manager. The youth designated Rapid Rehousing case manager began working with participants during the second quarter of 2021, increasing their caseload through the year to 15 participants at a time.

Destinations

The following data was obtained from HMIS and represents all heads of households, aged 18 - 24, exited in 2021 in all Rapid Rehousing program types.

2021 YA RRH Exit Destinations

Rental by client, no ongoing housing subsidy (HUD)

Other (HUD)

Hotel or motel paid for without emergency shelter voucher (HUD)

Legend:
- Hotel or motel paid for without emergency shelter voucher (HUD)
- Other (HUD)
- Rental by client, no ongoing housing subsidy (HUD)

(x-axis: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4)
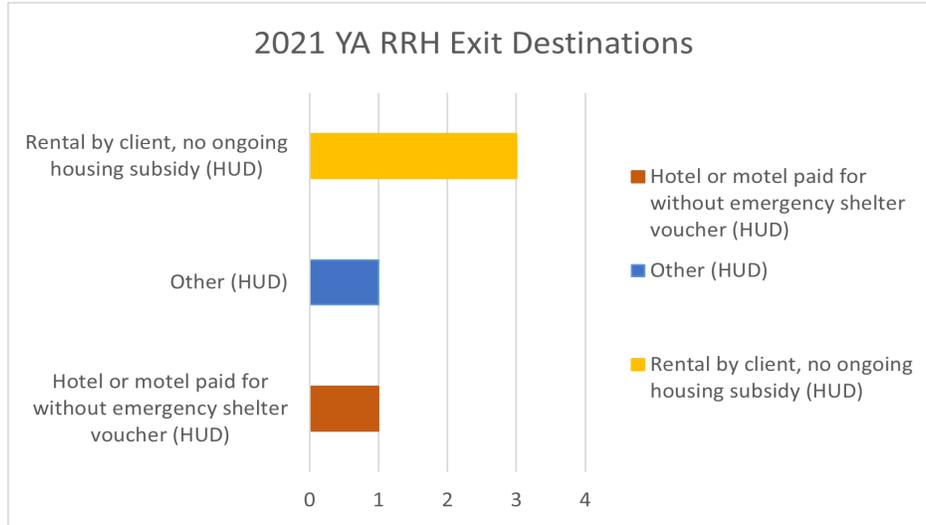
Of the 5 young adult participants exited from all Rapid Rehousing in 2021, 3 were recorded as exiting to permanent housing.

Challenges

It is difficult to accurately quantify the number of individuals at risk of or experiencing homelessness in a community. The difficulty is increased significantly when attempting to count the number of youth and young adults at risk of or experiencing homelessness. Youth and young adults who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness may not present for services for fear of repercussions, negative experiences with service providers, lack of affirming services, or a general lack of resources in the community. Additionally, providers use different definitions of homelessness and thus many youth may fall between the cracks in services as they may not meet each individual provider's eligibility criteria. The community also has lacked the capacity to conduct a Youth Point In Time Count. A Youth PIT count would target locations youth are known to frequent and give the community a better idea of the scope and severity of youth homelessness in the community. These reasons, along with many more, begin to tell the narrative of why youth and young adult statistics for at risk of and experiencing homelessness are severely under-representative of the numbers of youth lacking safe and stable housing within a given community.

In the Crater Region there is a lack of sufficient youth-specific services and thus counts for youth at risk of and experiencing homelessness are significantly under representative for the number of youth who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The current systems to collect data on youth at risk of and experiencing homelessness in the CACH LPG are HMIS, VAData, public school system data, and the Department of Social Services data. Due to the previously stated reasons, many youth and young adults are not captured by any of these systems and thus an accurate depiction of the severity and prevalence of youth and young adult homelessness is difficult to quantify accurately.

CACH Numbers and Needs

Young Adults At Risk of and Experiencing Homelessness in CACH LPG (age 18-24)

Data

The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a local information system used to collect client-level data on the provision of services within a given community. HMIS shows 29 young adults age 18-24 experiencing homelessness for the year 2021, 20 for 2020, and 19 for 2019 (see chart below). The Point In Time Count is an unduplicated count of the number of individuals experiencing homelessness on a given night in a community. In 2021 the PIT count for the region was 56 of which 2 were youth age 18-24.

The Action Alliance is a state-wide advocacy organization that works to strengthen how communities in Virginia respond to and prevent sexual assault and intimate partner violence. The Action Alliance reports 8 individuals age 18 to 24 experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness are fleeing domestic violence or intimate partner violence in the CACH region.

Petersburg City Public Schools Data shows 20 youth 18-24 doubled up and 3 in hotel/ motel for a total of 23 youth age 18 to 24 experiencing homelessness using the Department of Education definition of homelessness. While Petersburg City Public Schools does not represent the entire CACH LPG school system it is the most populous area in the CACH region and thus is likely to represent the largest number of youth experiencing or at risk of homelessness in the CACH Region.

Unaccompanied YYA Experiencing Homelessness (Source HMIS)

Year	2019	2020	2021
Total	19	20	29
BIPOC	12	14	24
White	7	6	5
Male	8	6	6
Female	11	14	23
Experienced DV	4	5	5

Unaccompanied Pregnant/ Parenting Experiencing Homelessness (Source HMIS)

Year	2019	2020	2021
Total	4	6	12
BIPOC	4	6	11
Male	0	0	2
Female	4	6	10

Unaccompanied YYA At Risk of Homelessness (source HMIS)

Year	2019	2020	2021
Total	48	27	35
BIPOC	47	25	33
White	1	2	2
Male	18	12	7
Female	30	15	28
Experienced DV	3	4	1

Unaccompanied Pregnant/ Parenting At Risk of Homelessness (source HMIS)

Year	2019	2020	2021
Total	26	11	13
BIPOC	26	11	13
Male	8	5	2
Female	15	6	11

Needs & Strategies

Youth and young adults in the CACH LPG experiencing homelessness have many needs that the current homeless system cannot address due to limited resources and capacity. The Coordinated Community Plan seeks to expand the current resources and invite new resources into the system to best serve the needs of the youth and young adults experiencing

homelessness in the Crater region. The Core Planning Team facilitated a conversation to gather the needs of youth and young adults across various systems including child welfare, homeless services, education systems, and non-profit organizations. System partners and CAYAB members detailed the needs of the youth and young adults that come in contact with systems partners and from lived experience.

The CACH YHDP Collective is committed to the four USICH Core Outcomes and addressing the outcomes as they relate to the needs of our youth and young adults at risk of and experiencing homelessness in the community.

USICH Four Core Outcomes:

1. **Stable housing** includes a safe and reliable place to call home
2. **Permanent connections** include ongoing attachments to families, communities, schools, and other positive social networks
3. **Education/ employment** includes high performance in and completion of educational training activities, especially for younger youth, and starting and maintaining adequate and stable employment, particularly for older youth; and
4. **Social-emotional well-being** includes the development of key competencies, attitudes, and behaviors that equip a young person to success across multiple domains of daily life, including school work, relations, and community

The following are the overarching needs for youth and young adults at risk of or experiencing homelessness in the CACH LPG:

Needs of All Youth & Young Adults At-risk of and Experiencing Homelessness
● Access to basic needs including food, shelter, and clothing

Housing

As we know, homelessness is first and foremost a housing issue. With that in mind, affordable housing is the top need for youth and young adults experiencing homelessness. Youth-specific and youth-affirming shelter that is low-barrier and accessible 24/7 is a need to keep youth and young adults from spending prolonged times unsheltered or street homeless. Many youth may not have credit or rental history, or may have less than perfect credit and rental history and need housing while they work on building their credit. Transitional Housing which is housing first and youth-specific is a need in the community that will allow youth and young adults the time they need to work with case managers to secure a lease or a permanent housing option. Lastly, youth and young adults need affordable housing and rental/ utility assistance in order to maintain their housing. Having affordable housing or connections with rental subsidies will allow youth and young adults to thrive in their chosen communities.

Stable Housing Needs of and Strategies for Youth & Young Adults At-risk of and Experiencing Homelessness

● Affordable housing
● Rent/ Utility assistance
● Youth-specific and youth-affirming transitional housing
● Shelter:
    o 24/7 access to low barrier and youth-specific shelter
    o Space to accommodate large families
    o Allows families to self identify, acceptance of chosen families
● Prevention/ Diversion services
● Information regarding tenant rights/ responsibilities
● Staff trained in Trauma-Informed Care

Education

Studies have shown that education, specifically secondary education, is crucial to increasing one's income. Youth and young adults need a connection to affordable post- secondary education so that they may earn the credentials necessary to secure higher-wage employment opportunities. In addition, youth and young adults are in need of soft skills and professional development opportunities to obtain and maintain employment. Youth and young adults are also in need of flexible or alternative school schedules to allow them to work when necessary or take care of their families. Rigid school schedules keep many youth from being able to fully engage in school as they must prioritize the needs of their households first.

Employment

Youth and young adults at risk of or experiencing homelessness need living wage employment opportunities in order to provide for themselves and their families. Prices for housing, food, and other basic necessities continue to rise, while youth and young adults struggle to find and maintain substantial employment. Alternative or flexible work schedules would allow youth and young adults to attend a school or find child care that suits their needs while still being able to remain gainfully employed. Additionally, a living wage would allow the youth to obtain various other life necessities such as food and shelter.

Education/Employment Needs of and Strategies for Youth & Young Adults At-risk of and Experiencing Homelessness
● Access to affordable post-secondary education ● Access to soft skills for education and employment ● Access to living-wage employment opportunities ● Access to flexible work schedules

Social/ Emotional Well Being

Youth and young adults at risk of or experiencing homelessness need youth-specific and youth-affirming services including affordable therapy and support groups. Providing safe spaces for youth to connect and heal will allow youth the space and opportunity to thrive in their community.

Social Emotional & Well-being Needs of and Strategies for Youth & Young Adults At-risk of and Experiencing Homelessness
● Drop-In Center   ● Culturally relevant supportive services   ● Youth-specific support groups   ● Family mediation/ therapy   ● Free/ affordable counseling/ therapy

Permanent Connections

Youth and young adults are in need of resources to connect them to their chosen communities that will allow them to thrive. Access to transportation, affordable health care, reliable internet access, and quality child care will allow YYA to actively engage in their work, studies, or other chosen activities.

Permanent Connections Needs of and Strategies for Youth & Young Adults At-risk of and Experiencing Homelessness
● Transportation   ● Free/ affordable dental care and health care   ● Financial literacy and Debt/ Credit counseling   ● Access to mainstream resources   ● Access to reliable computers and internet   ● Access to free/ affordable and quality child care   ● Education regarding existing resources in the community especially youth-specific resources

Subpopulations

In addition to the above needs, targeted populations such as pregnant and parenting youth, BIPOC, youth with disabilities, and many more subpopulations have needs specific to their population.

In 2021 pregnant and parenting youth represented approximately 41% of YYA experiencing homelessness and 37% of YYA at risk of homelessness. This indicates a need to colocate resources for pregnant and parenting youth with general youth homeless services. The ability to address the needs of pregnant and parenting youth during intake for homeless services will

reduce the number of times a pregnant or parenting youth will have to tell their story or repeat their needs in order to have their needs met.

Specific Needs of and Strategies for Pregnant & Parenting Youth & Young Adults
● Access to child care, especially for individuals who work late or overnight
● Remote opportunities or employment opportunities with flexible schedules
● Parenting and support groups
● Prenatal care
● Connection and assistance with benefits applications for WIC, TANF, and SNAP

Black, Indigenous, and people of color youth and young adults represent 82% of YYA experiencing homelessness and 94% of YYA at risk of homelessness. There is a significant overrepresentation of black youth presenting for services as the census data reports Black or African Americans only represent 44.85% of the CACH LPG population. The overrepresentation of YYA of Color in homeless services requires a deeper look into the causes of homelessness and a need to develop equitable system processes to ensure YYA of color are receiving the necessary services to obtain and maintain stable housing.

In addition to the overrepresentation of BIPOC youth in the homeless system, the education system also reports disparities in the inflow of BIPOC youth experiencing homelessness. In the 2020-2021 school year, 89% of the doubled up youth in Petersburg City Public Schools identified as Black/ African American, and 9% as Hispanic. 85% of youth residing in hotel/ motels identified as Black/ African American, and 1.8% as Hispanic. 100% of the youth residing in shelters identified as Black/ African American. While the percentage of youth identifying as black exceeds the Petersburg census data by 13%, and the rate of youth identifying as Hispanic is double that of the census data, the youth identifying as white is significantly less than that of the census. Only 1% of youth who are doubled up and 12.7% of youth residing in hotel/motels while the census reports 17.5% of the Petersburg population identifies as white. The needs of BIPOC YYA are crucial to their ability to exit homelessness quickly and reduce recidivism.

Specific Needs of and Strategies for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) Youth & Young Adults
● Equitable access to and outcomes for shelter and housing programs
● Diverse management and staff for shelter
● Diverse teaching and education staff
● Mentoring programs
● Connections to local groups established by BIPOC
● Culturally affirming mental health services
● Communications to break down racial stigmas

Our current systems are not adequate for the collection of data on YYA that identify as members of the LGBTQIA+ community. LGBTQIA+ questions may be asked at intake; however, due to a number of factors, including discomfort or fear of repercussions of disclosing one's sexual identity, many youth may opt to not disclose their sexual identity. While we currently do not have sufficient data on our LGBTQIA+ YYA we are actively working to partner with organizations that

serve our LGBTQIA+ youth and young adults. Building these relationships will hopefully allow us to gain knowledge and best practices on how to serve our LGBTQIA+ youth in an affirming way, as we know they are presenting for services, even if they do not identify themselves during intake.

Specific Needs of and Strategies for LGBTQ+ & Gender Non-Conforming Youth & Young Adults

● Shelter
    o Non- congregate shelter
    o Trans-affirming
    o Shelter provided based on gender identity rather than biological sex assignment
● Assistance navigating systems for changing name/ gender identity
● Safe spaces in schools (including but not limited to affirming bathroom)
● Awareness and creation of safe spaces in the community or events held by LGBTQIA+ folks

The needs of YYA with disabilities range from needing subsidized units to assistance with understanding their rights in housing, employment, and education. We aim to work to ensure services are accessible to all youth including those with disabilities. Meeting the needs of YYA with disabilities can help us better engage with our youth and young adults, and ensure they are receiving services to assist them with obtaining and maintaining stable housing. The education system reports 554 homeless youth (approximately 18%) as having a disability. The education system defined a disability as a child having an intellectual disability, hearing impairment, speech or language impairment, visual impairment, serious emotional disturbance, orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, development delay, other health impairment or specific learning disability requiring specialized instruction. Other students with disabilities needing only accommodations (not instruction) are not included in this count. The YHDP Collective realizes that many YYA with disabilities may not present for services due to accessibility of services. The YHDP aims to partner with organizations and access current programs to ensure services are accessible to all youth.

Specific Needs of and Strategies for Youth & Young Adults with Disabilities

● PSH
● Accessible shelter and housing opportunities
    o Shelters and housing that permit ESA's
    o Minimal requirements or noise regulations
● Assistance with filing for reasonable accommodations in every aspect of life including housing, school, and work
● Assistance with connecting with school resources such as how to get an IEP
● Connection with necessary medical or therapeutic services
● Assistance with advocating for themselves
● Understanding of their rights

The CACH LPG currently does not collect data on the number of YYA who are victims of human trafficking and exploitation. However, the YHDP Collective plans to build partnerships to better assess the needs of YYA who are victims of human trafficking and exploitation.

Specific Needs of and Strategies for Youth & Young Adults who are victims of Human Trafficking and Exploitation
● Confidential shelter location ● Connection with employers who are willing to employ individuals with criminal backgrounds ● Connection with legal representation ● Connection with medical care specific to sexual assault and exploitation needs

In 2021, 17% of YYA experiencing homelessness indicated they also experienced domestic violence, while approximately 3% of YYA at risk of homelessness experienced domestic violence. While these numbers are down from previous years, we note that these numbers may be an underrepresentation of the individuals experiencing domestic violence or intimate partner violence. The Action Alliance reported that 8 individuals experienced domestic violence. In order to get a better representation of the numbers of YYA experiencing the CACH YHDP Collective will work to strengthen partnerships with the local domestic violence agency to accurately collect data and assess the needs of YYA experiencing domestic violence.

Specific Needs of and Strategies for Youth & Young Adults who are Survivors of Domestic Violence
● Confidential shelter location ● DV specific shelter ● Connection with employers who are willing to employ individuals with inconsistent work history or frequent changes in employment ● Safety planning ● Connection to court advocates and assistance with protective orders, child custody, and child support ● Understanding of which service providers assist with domestic violence versus intimate partner violence ● Understanding of who is a mandated reporter

Currently the YHDP Collective does not have access to the statistics of the number of YYA within the CACH LPG that have been involved with the justice system. However, we know that many people who experience homelessness may also have involvement with the justice system. The CAYAB identified involvement with the justice system as a reason many youth may have difficulty obtaining housing and employment. The YHDP Collective is committed to building partnerships with our Justice System partners in order to better assess the needs of our youth with justice system involvement.

Specific Needs of and Strategies for Youth & Young Adults with Justice System Involvement

> - Employers who provide liveable wage job opportunities to individuals with a criminal background
> - Strategies to reduce recidivism
> - Connections to job training, certification programs, and trade schools

Current homeless programs are designed to house individuals regardless of documentation status. However we also note YYA who lack documentation may not present for services due to fear of repercussions. The YHDP Collective is working to ensure services are accessible to YYA who lack documentation or are immigrants. While the homeless service systems do not have data on prevalence of youth who are at risk or experincing homeless who are also an immigrant or undocumented, the education system reports 23 youth for the 2019-2020 school year as migratory. While these 23 migratory youth may not be unaccompanied homeless youth, we note that some of them may be. Current reporting systems do not record the intersection of unaccompanied homeless youth and migrant status. However, through continued collaboration with our education partners, we anticipate being able to assess the intersection through a report with the Virginia Department of Education.

Specific Needs of and Strategies forImmigrant and Undocumented Youth & Young Adults
● Access to services and legal advice
● Access to affordable healthcare
● Supports for youth & assistance in staying in contact with parents/family who have been deported
● Translators/bilingual staffing
● Economic support for youth whose parents may be deported or unable to work if not documented
● Shelter options that do not require proof of residency
● Legal services
● Housing opportunities for undocumented individuals
● Living wage employment opportunities for undocumented individuals
● Pathways to citizenship or documents status

The CACH YHDP Collective is currently building partnerships with the local child welfare agencies in the continuum of care to better assess the number of unaccompanied homeless youth who are involved with the child welfare system. The education system reports 201 (approximately 6%) homeless youth residing in shelters which includes staying in a shelter or transitional housing.

Specific Needs of and Strategies for Youth & Young Adults with Involvement in the Child Welfare System
● Services and housing available to those aging out of care
● Connection to parenting classes and education for parents

Youth At Risk of and Experiencing Homelessness (Unaccompanied Minors under age 18)

The education system reported 3021 homeless youth for the 2019-2020 school year. Of those youth 185 (6%) youth were unaccompanied. The Virginia Department of Education defined unaccompanied homeless youth as a youth who is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian and who fits the McKinney- Vento definition of homloessness. In 2020-2021 Petersburg City Public Schools identified 358 youth who met the Department of Education definition of homlessness. Of those 358 youth, 10 reported living in a shelter, 52 in a hotel/ motel, and 286 were doubled up. The CACH LPG currently lacks youth-specific access points and youth-specific shelter. The YHDP Collective aims to develop youth-specific access points across the CACH LPG to create pathways to housing for unaccompanied youth.

Specific Needs of and Strategies for Unaccompanied Minors
● Host Home Support ● Transitional Housing ● Alternative opportunities to finish school ● Free options to support emancipations ● Safe and affirming emergency shelter specific to under age 17 ● Access to medical and mental health care without parental/guardian consent

Summary

Overall the needs of our unaccompanied YYA require a cross system approach to providing adequate services to our most vulnerable youth and young adults. Many youth and young adults require access to stable housing and wrap around services that empower them to choose services that best meet their needs. Our goal is to develop a youth-focused and youth-affirming crisis system to provide youth quick access to shelter, housing, and wrap-around services that promote youth-choice.

In our CCP we also noted gaps in data for LGBTQIA+, youth involved in the justice system, and youth who experienced domestic violence and human trafficking. Gaps in our system data are seen as areas of opportunities for the YHDP Collective to build additional partnerships across various systems. Building partnerships and continued collaboration has been identified as a goal for the YHDP Collective.

Additional access points and increased capacity through new staff will allow the CACH LPG the ability to quickly identify and assess youth in need of services. In addition, additional staff and capacity will assist the CACH LPG with improving system data to better depict the prevalence and needs of YYA experiencing homlessness across the continuum.

Values & Principles

The YHDP Values and Principles are an essential part of developing a youth centered system that is different from the status quo. In addition to the locally defined Guiding Principles outlined in the Governance and Decision making section of this plan, CACH is committed to upholding the YHDP values & principles in the youth homeless response system.

For a complete overview on how HUD defines the values and principles, see Appendix 1.

Equity
VA CACH will develop and operationalize an equitable homeless response system in the following ways: - Collect data on who is showing up and who is not showing up in our systems   - Review outcomes for disparities as part of a CQI process   - Review engagement levels and participation rates for disparities   - Examine locality level data vs. regional data (to determine if there are specific places where inequities show up more frequently)   - Works towards leadership representation being consistent with overall population   - Look at culturally specific organizations (churches, non profits, community orgs) and how they are serving their folks and compare outcomes to traditional services   - Focus on quantitative and qualitative data of the folks who are life experiencers (Homeless youth/those experiencing racial inequity)   - Utilize racial disparity tools that exist in addressing those gaps   - Ensure that there is a diverse representation of individuals who will be responsible for evaluating the data   - Analyze disparities at each stage of the CE process   - Analyze "risks for"- need to look at more than homeless system outcomes if we're looking at prevention. We need to look at how youth stream into the system and measure related data

Positive Youth Development & Trauma-Informed Care
VA CACH will integrate Positive Youth Development (PYD) and Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) into the homeless response system in the following ways: - TIC required training for all providers who engage with youth experiencing homelessness   - Create accountability for the system/organization (and the adults running it) through policy and practice frameworks   - Implement both from project design to the training of stakeholders, to project monitoring systems, and using a data focused CQI process

- Conduct clear assessments of how systems do not yet promote TIC and PYD as part of the CQI process
- Put youth needs first. Focus on asking questions, not making demands, supporting their desires (i.e. education vs. workforce training, types of housing, etc.)
- Allow youth to determine their journey through services
- Assist participants in connecting with mental health resources as a standard service within all programs
- Ensure that youth are a part of the not only the creation of policies and procedures for the development of a youth crisis response system but are also apart of the evaluation

Family Engagement

VA CACH will integrate Family Engagement strategies into the homeless response system in the following ways:

- Uplift and recognize chosen families
- Provide supportive services for entire family, or make referral connections for these services
- Create a safe space for youth to define what constitutes a family for themselves
- Identify three therapeutic interventions that can be funded such as: Family Functional Therapy, Multisystemic Therapy, and Parent-Child Interaction Therapy.

Housing First

VA CACH will integrate Housing First strategies into the homeless response system in the following ways:

- Provide housing first training for all providers engaging with youth
- Ensure immediate access by increasing the number of slots of Joint TH/RRH to match the inflow of YYA in need
- Remove any barriers to services; review current programs to ensure access low barrier and housing first
- Ensure that youth are part of the monitoring of programs and their implementation of housing first best practices
- Train providers to develop an understanding that youth have a right to access services based on their definitions of safe, secure and stable housing
- Conduct outreach to landlords and advocate for young adults

Youth Choice

VA CACH will integrate Youth Choice interventions into the homeless response system in the following ways:

- Utilize an opt in method for services rather than opt out
- Ask youth what they want/what they need before determining course of action
- Invest time to ensure that youth understand all housing options available to them
- Train staff and develop policy with a focus on harm reduction rather than adult control of youth behavior
- Train adults to build trust, have conversations, care about what the youth care about
- Empower youth to set their own goals
- Center youth with lived experience when building the system so that viable options are built into the crisis response system
- Provide individualized services for each youth
- Empower youth to make their own decisions every step of the way
- Train staff to affirm youth that they are the decision-maker and problem-solve together
- Allow youth time to consider their options
- Provide youth with resources so that they may make the best choice for themselves

Unsheltered Homelessness

VA CACH will integrate the following strategies to serve youth experiencing unsheltered homelessness into the homeless response system in the following ways:

- 24/7 access to shelter
- 24/7 Coordinated Entry Line
- Create a Mobile App for Intake
- Support Youth Drop in Center for in person intakes
- Provide deep listening to what youth say is their priority to address their homelessness and promote their social/emotional safety
- Provide Rapid Rehousing services immediately
- Provide direct access to coordination entry to schools for students who are identified as experiencing unsheltered homelesssness
- Increase youth focused coordinated entry access points
- Explore and expand outreach strategies
- Build trust with youth so that unsheltered youth are willing to approach the housing/homeless system

Individualized / Client Driven Support

VA CACH will integrate Individualized/Client Driven Supports into the homeless response system in the following ways:

- Provide all options to each household/youth and allow them to decide for themselves what option is best for them

- Ensure an iterative process of assessing and addressing each individual's changing needs; participants need to know how to contact someone they have worked with before
- Base outcomes on youth's goals rather than standards goals set for everyone so that each youth's success is determined by what they have accomplished regarding their goals
- Build in accountability for providers in the youth crisis response system to demonstrate that their services are individualized and client-driven
- Prioritize individualized services for everyone who is served

Social / Community Integration
VA CACH will integrate Social/Community Integration strategies into the homeless response system in the following ways: - Help educate and reframe how the community sees young people who experience homelessness - Foster and encourage young adults to make the best informed choices - Create safe spaces with community partners who may already have some understanding and empathy. - Recognize the meaningful skills youth bring to community organizations/action boards etc. and intentionally plan to compensate them appropriately

Coordinated Entry
VA CACH will integrate Coordinated Entry into the homeless response system in the following ways: - Expand number of access points into Coordinated Entry System through the Mobile Navigation Team - Support creation of Drop In Center - Partner with Systems Partners including Education, Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare to create screening tool for youth experiencing homelessness - Expand capacity of Outreach Workers to interact with and conduct assessments of youth experiencing unsheltered homelessness

Goals, Objectives, & Action Steps

Goal 1: Ensure YYA voice is present at all tables where decisions affect YYA

Objective 1.1: Increase YYA representation, voice, and vote at local and state level decision-making bodies

Action Step 1.1.1: Secure voting seats on the CACH LPG Board
Action Step 1.1.2: Secure voting seats on the VA BoS Steering Committee Board
Action Step 1.1.3: Maintain voting seats on the YHDP Lead Team
Action Step 1.1.4: Advocate for statewide YAB
Action Step 1.1.5: Identify other local and state level decision- making bodies and request representation (and vote if applicable) for YYA
Action Step 1.1.6: Incorporate individuals with lived experience in the development and implementation of our projects

Partner(s) Responsible: CAYAB, YHDP Lead Team, CACH LPG Board, VA Bos Steering Committee, DHCD

Timeframe: 1 year

HUD Key Principles

Equity ☒	Positive Youth Development ☒	Trauma-Informed Care ☐	Family Engagement ☐
Housing First ☐	Unsheltered Homelessness ☐	Youth Choice ☒	Coordinated Entry ☐
Individualized and client-driven support ☐		Social and Community Integration ☐	Special Populations ☐

Goal 2: Identify all unaccompanied YYA experiencing homelessness through youth specific access points

Objective 2.1: Document all eligible YYA households in HMIS or comparable data system
Objective 2.2: Increase Outreach Efforts

Action Step 2.1.1: Ensure all homeless system partners have access to HMIS or comparable system
Action Step 2.1.2: Develop youth working group for case conferencing
Action Step 2.2.1: Develop plan for strategically locating unaccompanied youth through the creation of Mobile Navigation Project
Action Step 2.2.2: Increase outreach efforts and conduct assessments at locations unaccompanied YYA are known to frequent
Action Step 2.2.3: Develop drop in center or drop in access points across the CACH LPG, which meet basic needs of YYA

Partner(s) Responsible: St. Joseph's Villa, YHDP Grantee, YHDP Lead Team, and CAYAB

Timeframe: Ongoing

HUD Key Principles

28

Equity ☒	Positive Youth Development ☐	Trauma-Informed Care ☒	Family Engagement ☐
Housing First ☐	Unsheltered Homelessness ☒	Youth Choice ☒	Coordinated Entry ☒
Individualized and client-driven support ☐		Social and Community Integration ☐	Special Populations ☒

Goal 3: Increase access to the crisis response system

Objective 3.1: Increase awareness of system resources
Action Step 3.1.1: Identify and document all current system resources Action Step 3.1.2: Actively work to recruit partners who engage with unaccompanied YYA to become system partners Action Step 3.1.3: Develop Info Session or Resource Sheet for System Resources Action Step 3.1.4: Develop Flyers and Social Media Messaging regarding access/ connection points Action Step 3.1.5: Engage with YYA where they are presenting
Partner(s) Responsible: YHDP Lead Team, VA BoS Steering Committee, CAYAB
Timeframe: 6 months to 1 year

HUD Key Principles

Equity ☒	Positive Youth Development ☐	Trauma-Informed Care☐	Family Engagement ☐
Housing First ☒	Unsheltered Homelessness ☒	Youth Choice ☒	Coordinated Entry ☒
Individualized and client-driven support ☐		Social and Community Integration ☒	Special Populations ☒

Goal 4: Prevent Homelessness for Youth and Young Adults whenever possible

Objective 4.1: Utilize Prevention and Diversion Services
Action Step 4.1.1: Identify and obtain current funding sources for prevention and diversion services Action Step 4.1.2: Obtain funding for prevention and diversion services Action Step 4.1.3: Develop and implement youth specific prevention and diversion assessment tools Action Step 4.1.4: Increase awareness of Prevention and Diversion services and eligibility criteria Action Step 4.1.5: Develop local strategy to increase competency of staff in supporting youth in identifying and strengthening natural support

Partner(s) Responsible: Lead Team, CAYAB, VA BOS Steering Committee

Timeframe: 1 year

HUD Key Principles			
Equity ☐	Positive Youth Development ☐	Trauma-Informed Care ☐	Family Engagement ☒
Housing First ☒	Unsheltered Homelessness ☒	Youth Choice ☒	Coordinated Entry ☒
Individualized and client-driven support ☒		Social and Community Integration ☐	Special Populations ☒

Goal 5: Provide immediate access to low barrier shelter to any eligible YYA
Objective 5.1: Assess community's current shelter capacity Objective 5.2: Evaluate community need for youth-specific shelter
Action Step 5.1.1: Conduct needs assessment that centers voices of YYA with lived experience
Partner(s) Responsible: Lead Team, CAYAB, CACH Board
Timeframe: 1 - 2 years

HUD Key Principles			
Equity ☒	Positive Youth Development ☒	Trauma-Informed Care ☒	Family Engagement ☐
Housing First ☒	Unsheltered Homelessness ☒	Youth Choice ☒	Coordinated Entry ☐
Individualized and client-driven support ☐		Social and Community Integration ☐	Special Populations ☒

Goal 6: Build and maintain relationships between system partners
Objective 6.1: Develop priorities for youth for RRH and PSH Objective 6.2: Develop youth- specific Diversion, Prevention, RRH, and PSH
Action Step 6.1.1: Advocate to CACH LPG to develop priorities for non-youth dedicated RRH and PSH Action Step 6.2.1: Utilize YHDP to increase youth-dedicated housing capacity

Action Step 6.2.2: Operationalize youth choice to equip youth with all necessary resources to make an informed choice of all housing options before being referred to program within homeless service system
Partner(s) Responsible: YHDP Lead Team, YHDP, CAYAB, and CACH Board
Timeframe: 6 months; ongoing

HUD Key Principles			
Equity ☐	Positive Youth Development ☒	Trauma-Informed Care ☒	Family Engagement ☐
Housing First ☒	Unsheltered Homelessness ☐	Youth Choice ☒	Coordinated Entry ☒
Individualized and client-driven support ☒		Social and Community Integration ☐	Special Populations ☐

Goal 7: Develop Equitable and Action-oriented CQI Process

Objective 7.1: Implement Quantity, Standards, and Improvement Committee Objective 7.2: Develop new projects with equity lens
Action Step 7.1.1: Evaluate current system outcomes broken out by race, gender, sexual orientation, pregnant & parenting, and more Action Step 7.1.2: Evaluate current system's level of cultural competency by youth perception of their interactions with staff in the system Action Step 7.1.3: Evaluate the YAB perception of their leadership in development of new projects and system changes. Action 7.1.4: Ensure accurate data quality in all new projects
Partner(s) Responsible: Lead Team, CAYAB, and VA BoS Steering Committee
Timeframe: 1- 2 years

HUD Key Principles			
Equity ☒	Positive Youth Development ☒	Trauma-Informed Care ☒	Family Engagement ☐
Housing First ☐	Unsheltered Homelessness ☐	Youth Choice ☐	Coordinated Entry ☐
Individualized and client-driven support ☐		Social and Community Integration ☐	Special Populations ☒

Goal 8: Build and maintain relationships between system partners
Objective 8.1: Increase awareness of YYA homelessness Objective 8.2: Increase collaboration between cross-system partners and homeless service providers
Action Step 8.1.1: Develop and implement an outreach and advocacy plan to increase awareness in CACH LPG Action Step 8.2.1: Develop YHDP working group as space for system providers to collaborate monthly Action Step 8.2.2: Maintain seats for education partners on YHDP Lead Team Action Step 8.2.3: Evaluate need to invite employment, justice system, child welfare partners to YHDP Lead Team Action Step 8.2.4: Develop data sharing agreements and/or Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) between system partners
Partner(s) Responsible: YHDP Lead Team, CAYAB
Timeframe: 6 months; ongoing

HUD Key Principles			
Equity ☐	Positive Youth Development ☐	Trauma-Informed Care ☐	Family Engagement ☐
Housing First ☐	Unsheltered Homelessness ☐	Youth Choice ☐	Coordinated Entry ☐
Individualized and client-driven support ☐		Social and Community Integration ☒	Special Populations ☒

Governance & Decision Making Structure

Guiding Principles:

The following guiding principles were used as a framework for the development of the governance and decision making structure. While the following guiding principles serve as a framework for the development of the governance structure, the guiding principles will be continuously evaluated so that they may evolve as the work evolves. The guiding principles will be used throughout the governance of the YHDP and youth-focused work in the CACH region in order to ensure youth voice is uplifted and centered, the work is authentic, and the structure is conducive to effective and meaningful project development and implementation. The YHDP Collective agrees to ensure the following principles guide our youth-focused work:

- Center the voices of youth and young adults with lived experience

- Ensure there is awareness of power structures and willingness of older adult partners to back out of those structures in order for youth to truly participate as equal partners
- Work toward consensus rather than merely majority to ensure there is understanding and agreement among members of leadership
- Continuously work towards authentic youth collaboration, youth autonomy, and youth authority
- Maintain a judgment free zone and psychologically safe environment
- Maintain a safe space for honest collaboration
- Maintain respect for and value all identities and backgrounds
- Ensuring everyone is on the same page, and terminology is defined and understood by all parties
- Ensure there is meaningful youth engagement in all levels of decision-making
- Ensure there is diversity in thought, representation, and capabilities to encourage and foster innovation and creative thinking
- Ensure all parties understand and consent to the decision making process
- Ensure member of the YHDP Lead Team are vested in the youth work
- Ensure the process is accessible
- Ensure proposed projects are based in equity
- Ensure proposed projects implement Trauma-Informed Care best practices
- Ensure decision making process is transparent

Decision Making Process:

The Core Planning Team developed a governance structure that was then agreed upon using a consensus model during a Core Planning Team meeting.
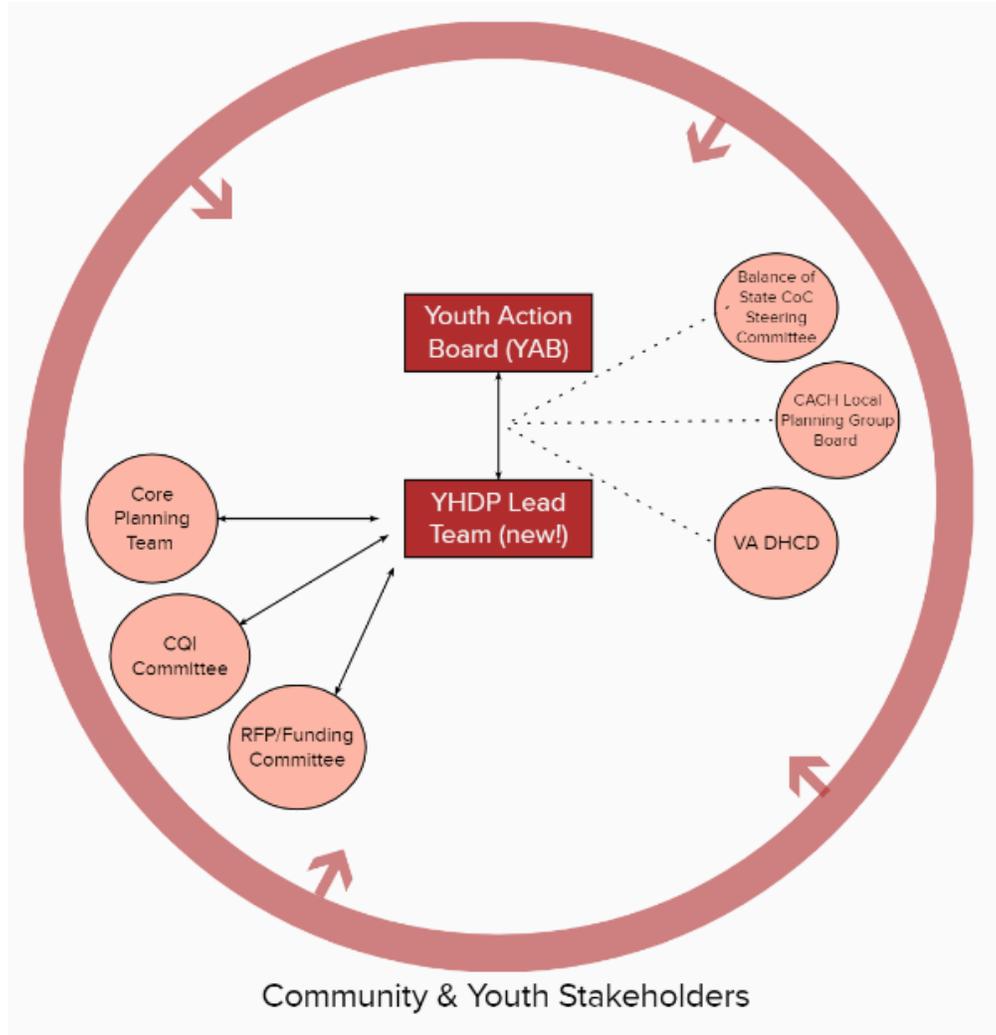
Description: Decision makers are represented in the middle; working groups are represented on the right; existing bodies that need to be informed and receive recommendations from the decision makers are on the left. Information or ideas may come from the community or youth stakeholders.

Decision Makers

The YHDP Lead Team and the YAB are equal collaborators and contributors in the YHDP work. Decisions cannot be approved without the approval of the YHDP Lead Team and the YAB.

- Youth Action Board: The Crater Area Youth Action Board (CAYAB) makes decisions on the development and implementation of a coordinated community plan to prevent and end youth homelessness. The YAB takes the lead on the following activities: planning and coordinating a Youth PIT Count; connecting with youth-serving organizations (org) to ensure affected youth have access to the CACH Housing Resource Center, which serves as the community's hub for housing programs, and youth specific resources; and

developing policies for the CACH Governance that are youth affirming and incorporate positive youth development principles.

- YHDP Lead Team: The YHDP Lead Team is a voting body which contains 11 members, including 3 members of the YAB. The YHDP Lead Team makes decisions on the development and implementation of the coordinated community plan to end youth homelessness and is responsible for ensuring appropriate signatures are acquired from DHCD, CACH Board, and the VA BoS Steering Committee as needed. In addition the YHDP Lead Team is responsible for implementing and leading committees deemed necessary for the development, implementation, and evaluation of YHDP projects.
  - YHDP Voting Members (11 members)
    - Youth Action Board (3 votes)
    - Dept. of Housing & Community Development (1 vote)
    - VA Balance of State (1 vote)
    - St. Joseph's Villa (2 votes)
    - Commonwealth Catholic Charities (1 vote)
    - CACH Board (1 vote)
    - Education (1 vote)
    - Community Partners (1 vote)
  - At no time may one agency have more votes than the YAB on the YHDP Lead Team.

Working Groups

The current standing committees of the YHDP Lead Team are the RFP/ Funding Committee, the Core Planning Team, and the Quality/ Standards/ Improvement Committee. The YHDP Lead Team has the authority to implement new working committees as necessary to maintain compliance with YHDP grants.

The working committees will filter recommendations up to the YHDP Lead Team who will then vote on the recommendations. Recommendations will also be voted on by the YAB. Recommendations that receive approval from both the YAB and YHDP Lead Team will be acted upon. Recommendations that do not will be sent back to the committee.

- Core Planning Team: A diverse set of stakeholders responsible for supporting the creation of the Coordinated Community plan to end youth homelessness in the Crater Area.
- RFP/Funding Committee - A new committee responsible for planning and implementing the local competition for funding for programs to address youth homelessness in the crater area.
- Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Committee: A new committee responsible for developing and implementing a CQI process, tracking the progress of YHDP in the Crater region.

Existing Governing Bodies

DHCD, the VA BoS Steering Committee, and the CACH Board of Directors are standing entities and partners that are invested in the YHDP work either by providing dedicated staff, funding, or hold decision making capabilities. At times decisions require the approval of one or all three of these entities and thus they must be informed of the work of YHDP. These three entities are

listed to the left of the governance structure as they will be informed of the work of YHDP so that they may make informed decisions as YHDP work requires their signatures. The three entities do not represent a hierarchy or authoritative presence in YHDP work, as not all work requires their sign off.

- DHCD (Dept. of Housing & Community Development): serves at the lead agency, collaborative applicant and HMIS lead for the Virgnia BoS.
- VA BoS Steering Committee: The Virginia Balance of State CoC Steering Committee is the lead decision-making body and board responsible for planning for the use of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) HEARTH CoC resources and coordinating these funds with other relevant resources in the jurisdiction to ensure homelessness is rare, brief, and a one-time occurrence.
- CACH Board of Directors: Operates as the CACH region lead. The CACH Local Planning Group holds local governance policies, has public meetings at least every other month, completes HUD required reporting, and participates in HMIS.

Stakeholders

The Crater Area YHDP Collective includes stakeholders with a wide range of interests and expertise. The Core Planning Team includes cross systems partners, as we understand homelessness affects every aspect of a youth's life. In order to maximize resources and have a better understanding of the needs of youth and young adults experiencing homelessness the Core Planning Team convened stakeholders from the Youth Action Board, homeless services, education partners, non-profits, child welfare agencies, MHSA agencies, and WOIA. Stakeholders participated in the development of the Coordinated Community Plan and the overall YHDP work in a number of ways, including participating in weekly Core Planning Team meetings, participating on the YHDP Lead Team or one of its working groups, providing data and feedback on the various elements of the CCP, and being a part of our larger network, the YHDP Collective, to receive updates on progress of the YHDP work.

Partner	Partner's Name & Role	Involvement
Youth Action Board	Crater Area YAB	Participated in the development of the CCP, serves on the Core Planning Team and holds voting membership on the YHDP Lead Team
Public Child Welfare Agencies	1. Hopewell Department of Social Services 2. Surry Department of Social Services 3. Prince George Department of Social	Hopewell, Surry, and Prince George DSS provided data for the CCP. Additionally, Hopewell DSS serves on the Core Planning Team. Colonial

	Services 4. Colonial Heights Office on Youth and Human Services 5. Petersburg Department of Social Services	Heights and Petersburg are recipients of our YHDP updates.
Continuum of Care Emergency Solutions Grant Program Recipients	1. Commonwealth Catholic Charities 2. St. Joseph's Villa 3. The Improvement Association	Commonwealth Catholic Charities and St. Joseph's Villa participated in the development of the CCP, served on the Core Planning Team, and hold voting membership on the YHDP Lead Team. The Improvement Association receives our YHDP updates.
Local and State Government	Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development	Core Planning Team, YHDP Lead Team
Runaway and Homeless Youth Program Providers	Not Applicable in Crater Area	
Health, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse Agencies	1. Central Virginia Health Services, Inc 2. Serenity, Inc 3. Council Connect 4. Anthem Health Managed Care Organization	1. Updates 2. Updates 3. Core Planning Team 4. Provide feedback
Early Childhood Development and Child Care Providers	1. Petersburg City Public Schools 2. Surry County Public Schools	1. Provided data for CCP 2. Updates
Local and State Educational Agencies	Project HOPE-VA	Core planning team; YHDP Lead Team
Institutions of Higher Education	1. Virginia State University 2. Virginia Commonwealth University	1. Updates 2. Updates
Non-profit Youth Organizations	1. Children's Home Society of VA 2. Boys & Girls Club of	1. Core Planning Team 2. Core Planning

	Metro Richmond 3. STORY VA 4. Petersburg Family YMCA 5. United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg	Team 3. Core Planning Team 4. Provide feedback 5. Core Planning Team
Privately funded Homeless Organizations	1. PUSH Faith 2. The James House	1. Core Planning Team 2. Provided data for CCP
Local Advocacy, Research, and Philanthropic Organizations	1. Mt. Olivet Baptist Church 2. Action Alliance	1. Core Planning Team 2. Provided data for CCP
Community Development Corporations	Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development	Core Planning Team, YHDP Lead Team
Continuum of Care Board	CACH Board of Directors	Core Planning Team, YHDP Lead Team
Workforce Development	Crater Regional Workforce Development Board	Core Planning Team

While the development of this plan included a diverse set of stakeholders, increasing partnerships is an ongoing strategy for the CACH region. Future partnerships that will be explored include:

❖ Juvenile and Adult Corrections and Probation
❖ Local and State Law Enforcement and Judges
❖ Public Housing Authorities
❖ Affordable Housing Providers
❖ Landlords
❖ Culturally Specific Organizations

New Projects

The following projects have been prioritized for YHDP funding.

Mobile Navigation & Diversion	
Core Elements of the Project	The Mobile Navigation & Diversion project will provide additional service support to youth at risk of and experiencing homelessness. This team will ensure YYA are connected to necessary supports in the system and support each young person

in moving towards stable housing. Holistic services and housing options will be explored with each young person, including housing opportunities with natural supports and/or chosen families.

Services will be provided to participants while experiencing homelessness and for up to 6 months after they have been permanently housed.

Mobile Navigation
Mobile Navigation includes navigation services that can be administered at an official drop-in center or drop-in access points across the CACH area. The Mobile Navigation & Diversion Team will connect youth to the Coordinated Entry System. The Mobile Navigation team is responsible for offering diversion services and connections to mainstream benefits including navigation through the homeless response system, mental health, substance abuse, child welfare, justice, public and market housing systems.

If official Drop In Centers are developed anywhere in the CACH region, the Mobile Navigation & Diversion Team will collaborate with those Centers to coordinate service delivery in a common space. However, Mobile Navigation & Diversion services will be provided to the entire CACH region regardless of the status of official Drop In Centers.

The Mobile Navigation & Diversion team will work with local homeless response providers and system partners to identify access points where youth can easily meet them and create a schedule for drop-In services to accommodate the full region. While relationships will need to be established, it is expected that these regions welcome the Navigation Team into these spaces.

Identified Mobile Access Points across the CACH region:
- YMCA
- Libraries
- Churches
- Homeless liaisons & schools

Diversion
Diversion assistance can aid youth in preserving their current housing situation or assisting households in finding housing outside of shelter while they receive services to stabilize their housing or help them move into permanent housing. These youth will be served by the Mobile Navigation Team while experiencing

	housing instability and for up to 6 months after they are permanently housed.. These strategies can reduce the number of people entering the homeless assistance system and the demand for shelter and other programmatic housing beds.
Target Population	Youth under the age of 25, including pregnant and parenting youth plus all special population groups. HUD Homeless Categories 1, 2, and 4.
Projected Number of Youth to be Served (annual)	45

Supportive Services Description	Mobile Navigation & Diversion Team provides direct support to youth in crisis as they navigate and engage with the coordinated entry system, homeless response system and diversion from literal homelessness. These include the following supportive services:
	
	Youth Navigation
	● Connection to Coordinated Entry System at various access points throughout CACH CoC.
	● Housing Problem Solving
	● Case Management
	    ○ Connections to mainstream benefits
	    ○ Connections to mental health, substance abuse services
	    ○ Connections to employment
	    ○ Connections to education
	    ○ Connection to Justice and Legal Services
	    ○ Connections to Child Welfare
	● Utilization of Trauma Informed Care and Positive Youth Development Frameworks
	● Address housing barriers (credit, rental history, etc.)
	
	Diversion
	● Screening for diversion eligibility and appropriateness of diversion to family member/chosen family members or other natural supports
	● Safety and supportive service planning with youth and diversion provider
	● Utilization and exploration of natural support systems.
	● Utilization of Trauma Informed Care and Positive Youth Development Frameworks
	● Address housing barriers (credit, rental history, etc.)
	● Assessment of needs of youth and needs of household/location for which youth are diverted to.
	    ○ Kinship support can be provided

	● Connection to mainstream and public permanent housing options ● Case Management ○ Connections to mainstream benefits ○ Connections to mental health, substance abuse services ○ Connections to employment ○ Connections to education ○ Connection to Justice and Legal Services ○ Connections to Child Welfare
Desired Outcomes	1. Exits to permanent destinations 2. Maintain or increase household Income Education outcomes, permanent connections outcomes, and social emotional outcomes will be included after the community determines strategies for tracking & measuring success.
Innovative Strategies to be built into Implementation	Coordination of two services into a single project. Navigators will provide diversion assistance to help prevent an episode of homelessness.
Is the project anticipated to be funded with YHDP funds?	*Yes, Supportive Services Only (SSO)*
Will the project seek any CoC program flexibilities through the notification or approval process? (See Appendix A of the YHDP NOFO for more details)	Yes. YHDP flexibilities will be outlined in the local competition for YHDP funds and respondents will determine if flexibilities will be used.
Is the project still feasible, if flexibilities are applied for but not granted? (If applicable)	Yes
Projected Cost (1 year)	$300,000- $350,000

YHDP Values & Principles Addressed in this Project
See Values & Principles section of this plan for more information on how these will be integrated into the project.
USICH 4-Core Outcomes Addressed in this Project

Stable Housing	Project will emphasize stable housing by encouraging family reconnection and extended runways to permanent housing.
Permanent Connections	Project will emphasize permanent connections by utilizing natural supports in the client's chosen diversion destination and building natural support systems into the client's case plan.
Education/Employment	Project will emphasize education and employment by helping youth navigate education and employment options.
Social/Emotional Well-being	Project will emphasize social / emotional well-being by connecting youth to mental health resources and measuring client's social / emotional well-being through ongoing assessment.

Joint Transitional Housing / Rapid ReHousing	
Core Elements of the Project	Joint Transitional Housing / Rapid Rehousing (TH/RRH) is one project that offers both Transitional Housing and Rapid Rehousing for up to 24 months, providing short term emergency housing with a transition to permanent housing through rapid rehousing. The goal for this project is to move from Transitional Housing into Permanent Housing. Transitional housing will be offered to all youth entering the program but is not required to receive rental assistance. Youth may choose to go first into transitional housing and then transition into Rapid Rehousing or other Permanent Housing. Youth may also choose to be served in a Rapid Rehousing model only. The project will be flexible to meet the individualized needs of each youth enrolled in the project. **Transitional Housing (TH)** The intention of the Transitional Housing portion of the project is to provide an immediate housing

intervention for youth who do not have a safe and appropriate place to stay that night. However, the TH portion will be flexible enough to meet the needs of YYA with specific barriers and offer a structure bridge in moving from TH to RRH.

Each model will have different aims, emphasis and timelines. Youth who require crisis housing will be encouraged to stay in TH for under 30 days before transitioning into Rapid Rehousing or other permanent housing solutions.

Youth with high barriers may choose transitional housing as a means to focus more on stabilization and addressing housing barriers such as mental health or substance abuse services and may benefit from a focus on education and career preparation.

 TH providers must follow a Housing First model and work with each household to assist them in obtaining housing as quickly as possible. By definition, transitional housing is a facility-based or scattered-site program that offers housing and services for up to two years to individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

Rapid Rehousing (RRH)

Rapid re-housing is an intervention designed to help youth exit homelessness quickly and into permanent housing. Both Transitional Housing and Rapid re-housing assistance are low-barrier and offered without preconditions (such as employment, income, absence of criminal record, or sobriety).

RRH participants must have a lease in their own name. Assistance is provided directly to the landlord and the landlord cannot be the provider organization, affiliate, or subsidiary of the provider organization to ensure there is not a conflict of interest.

The resources and services provided are tailored to the unique needs of the household. The core components of RRH include housing identification,

	rent and move-in assistance, and case management and services. While RRH must have all three components available, it is not required that a single entity provides all three or that a household accesses them all. For all RRH assistance, an initial intake is required to determine program eligibility and to document homeless status. Using a housing barrier assessment and participant input, a housing plan is written outlining the steps necessary for permanent housing and stabilization to be achieved. Providers must have written agreements with both the participant and the landlord that identify the terms of the RRHassistance.
Target Population	Youth under the age of 25, including pregnant and parenting youth plus all special population groups. HUD Homeless Categories 1, 2, and 4.
Projected Number of Youth to be Served (annual)	20
Supportive Services Description	***Housing Identification*** ● Coordinate with Youth Navigators to support housing identification ● Landlord identification & recruitment ***Housing Stability Services*** ● Utilization of Trauma Informed Care and Positive Youth Development Frameworks ● Address housing barriers (credit, rental history, etc.) ● Help households negotiate manageable and appropriate lease agreements with landlords ● Basic life skills information/counseling on money management, use of credit, housekeeping, proper nutrition/meal preparation, and access to health care (e.g., doctors, medication, and mental and behavioral health services). ● Engage in housing stability plan/case plan discussion, centering the individual needs/wants of each youth participant ● Connection to natural supports, chosen family, and other permanent connections ● Resource referrals

	- Provision of Mental Health supports, either on staff or with direct partnerships with community providers - On-going Housing Case management (Landlord mediation, eviction prevention, budgeting, etc.) - Educational and career advancement counseling regarding attainment of general equivalency diploma (GED); attendance/financing of education at a technical school, trade school or college; including successful work ethic and attitude models. - Job preparation and attainment counseling - Connection to applicable benefits ***Direct Assistance:*** - Assistance with any portion of rent during a month counts as a month toward the 24 month limit. - Rapid Re-housing providers adhere to the following practices: - Determinations of the amount of rental assistance provided, such as "shallow subsidies" (payment of a portion of the rent), payment of 100 percent of the rent charged, or graduated/declining subsidies are made and reassessed at least every three months. - Payment of rent arrears consists of a one-time payment for up to six months in arrears, including any late fees on those arrears. Rent arrears may be paid only if the payment enables the program participant to obtain a housing unit. If funds are used to pay rent arrears, the arrears must be included in determining the total period of the program participant's rental assistance, which may not exceed 24 months. - Appropriate levels of case management must be provided in order to ensure housing stability and at a minimum monthly case management must be provided. - Program participants may share in the costs of rent. - Assistance is "needs-based," meaning that

	providers determine the amount of assistance based on the minimum amount needed to help the program participant maintain housing stability. This allows communities to use program resources efficiently to serve as many households as possible. ● When households are moved into a unit, the rent must meet rental reasonableness, and the unit must meet habitability and lead paint standards.
Desired Outcomes	The project will track the following for review: 1. Exits to permanent destinations 2. Maintain or Increase household Income 3. Returns to homelessness 4. Increase attendance for YYA enrolled in education. 5. Increase permanent connections & social emotional well-being *Additional outcomes may be defined prior to implementation of the project, specifically around permanent connections and social emotional well-being*
Innovative Strategies to be built into Implementation	Progressive Engagement Strategies
Is the project anticipated to be funded with YHDP funds?	*Yes, Joint TH-RRH*
Will the project seek any CoC program flexibilities through the waiver notification or approval process? (See Appendix A of the YHDP NOFO for more details)	Yes. YHDP flexibilities will be outlined in the local competition for YHDP funds and respondents will determine if flexibilities will be used.
Is the project still feasible, if flexibilities are applied for but not granted? (If applicable)	Yes
Projected Cost (1 year)	$350,000 - $425,000

YHDP Values & Principles Addressed in this Project
See Values & Principles section of this plan for more information on how these will be integrated into the project.

USICH 4-Core Outcomes Addressed in this Project	
Stable Housing	Project will emphasize stable housing by encouraging family reconnection and extended runways to permanent housing.
Permanent Connections	Project will emphasize permanent connections by utilizing natural supports in client's chosen diversion destination and building natural support systems into client's case plan.
Education/Employment	Project will emphasize education and employment by helping youth navigate education and employment options.
Social/Emotional Well-being	Project will emphasize social / emotional well-being by connecting youth to mental health resources and measuring client's social / emotional well-being through ongoing assessment.

Signatures

The Department of Housing and Urban Development requires signatures from the Continuum of Care, Public CHild Welfare Agency, Local Government Agency, Youth Action Board, and Runaway and Homeless Youth Agencies (if applicable). The YHDP Collective has excluded the signature of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Agency, as there are no known agencies in the Crater Area Coalition on Homelessness Local Planning Group.

The signature(s) below attests to the approval and support of the Crater Area Coalition on Homelessness Coordinated Community Plan. We agree to work collaboratively with our partners to implement a comprehensive system to prevent and end youth homelessness, including the goals and objectives outlined in the plan.

Continuum of Care:

Virginia Balance of State Continuum of Care

Name: Ara Mendoza

Title: Balance of State CoC Program Manager

Organization: Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development

Signature: _____

Date: 4/22/2022

Crater Area Coalition on Homelessness Board of Directors

Name: Genevieve Lohr

Title: Secretary

Organization: CACH BOD

Signature: _____
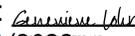
Date: 4/21/2022

Public Child Welfare Agency

Name: Ray Spicer

Title: Director

Organization: Hopewell Social Services

Signature: _____

Date: 4/19/2022

Local Government Agency

Name: Nichele Carver

Title: Associate Director

Organization: Virginia Dept. of Housing and Comm. Development

Signature: _____

Date: 4/18/2022

CACH
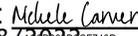
Crater Area Youth Action Board (CAYAB)

Name:___Joneisha Thomas___

Title: Youth member___

Signature:___*Thomas*___

Date: 4/19/2022___

Name:_____

Title:_____

Signature:_____
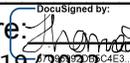
Date:_____

Name:_____

Title:_____

Signature:_____

Date:_____

Name:___Makayla Burroughs___

Title: Youth Member___

Signature:___*Makayla*___
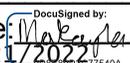
Date: 4/21/2022___

Name:_____

Title:_____

Signature:_____

Date:_____

Name:_____

Title:_____

Signature:_____

Date:_____

Appendix 1 - YHDP Values & Principles

YHDP Value/Principle	Description
U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) Youth Framework and the Four Core Outcomes.	USICH coordinates the federal response to homelessness and creates a national partnership at every level of government and with the private sector to reduce and end homelessness. The coordinated community plan must demonstrate a commitment to the principles of the USICH Youth Framework to End Youth Homelessness published in 2012 and to its four core outcomes: ● Stable housing includes a safe and reliable place to call home; ● Permanent connections include ongoing attachments to families, communities, schools, and other positive social networks; ● Education/employment includes high performance in and completion of educational and training activities, especially for younger youth, and starting and maintaining adequate and stable employment, particularly for older youth; and ● Social-emotional well-being includes the development of key competencies, attitudes, and behaviors that equip a young person to succeed across multiple domains of daily life, including school, work, relationships, and community;
Special Populations	USICH, in partnership with its member agencies, has identified several special populations of youth experiencing homelessness that are particularly vulnerable in how they experience homelessness, as well as their pathways in and out of homelessness, in ways that are distinct from the general population of youth. For these particularly vulnerable and often overrepresented young people, there is a need for identification and engagement strategies, infrastructure considerations, and housing and service-delivery approaches that are responsive to their specific needs. The coordinated community plan must identify and address the local impact of homelessness on these special populations and address how the community will meet the needs of youth who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ); youth who are gender-non-conforming; minors (under the age of 18); youth involved with juvenile justice and child welfare systems; and victims of sexual trafficking and exploitation.
Equity	Research has found significant racial and ethnic disparities in rates of homelessness. Specifically, Black, Indigenous, Hispanic (non-white), and LGBTQ youth experience homelessness at disproportionately higher rates. Community efforts to prevent and

	end homelessness should consider and address racial inequities to successfully achieve positive outcomes for all persons experiencing homelessness. The coordinated community plan must address how the community is measuring and considering racial inequities and other disparities in the risks for, and experiences of homelessness in the community, consistent with fair housing and civil rights requirements.
Positive Youth Development (PYD) and Trauma Informed Care (TIC)	Both PYD and TIC are accepted best practices in housing and service delivery for youth and include principles and service frameworks. The coordinated community plan must address how PYD and TIC will be incorporated into all aspects of the youth crisis response system, including at the system and project levels.
Family Engagement	HUD believes that the best diversion and intervention strategy is to engage families, whenever appropriate, through community partnerships with organizations such as child welfare agencies, schools, youth providers, and other community human services and homeless services providers. The coordinated community plan must address family engagement strategies and services designed to strengthen, stabilize, and reunify families. Potential services include family counseling, conflict resolution, parenting support, relative or kinship caregiver resources, targeted substance abuse and mental health treatment, etc.
Housing First	Housing is a cornerstone for meeting a multitude of basic needs necessary for success. Young people should be provided with rapid access to safe, secure, and stable housing that meets their needs as quickly as possible, without the condition that they are 'ready' for housing. The coordinated community plan must address how all youth will be offered immediate access to safe, secure, and stable housing with no preconditions.
Unsheltered homelessness	HUD estimates that 50% of youth experiencing homelessness are unsheltered. The coordinated community plan must address how the projects will address and decrease unsheltered youth homelessness in the community.
Youth choice	The capacity for self-determination may be a critical factor in obtaining many positive outcomes for Transition Age Youth, and is closely related to the principles of PYD. Consistent with federal youth policy, allowing youth to exercise self-determination is a youth centered approach that values youths' expressed needs, self-awareness, and community knowledge. This youth centered approach emphasizes youth choice in terms of the kind of housing youth need and the extent and nature of supports and services they access and presents alternative options for youth who avoid

	programs with barriers like sobriety or abstinence. The coordinated community plan must address how youth choice will be integrated into all aspects of the youth crisis response system.
Individualized and client-driven supports	The coordinated community plan must acknowledge that the needs of the young people to be served will be unique. Housing and support packages that help prevent and end homelessness among youth must recognize and respond to individual differences across individuals to serve them appropriately and efficiently. Communities must design the system flexibly to accommodate individuals with both high and low service needs, as well as the need for short-term or long-term supports. The coordinated community plan must address how the youth crisis response system will provide individualized and client-driven supports.
Social and community integration	The goal of youth homelessness services should be a successful transition to adulthood, including the successful integration into a community as a positive contributing community member. To accomplish this requires the community to provide socially supportive engagement and the opportunity for youth to participate in meaningful community activities.
Coordinated Entry	Coordinated entry processes are necessary components of a high functioning crisis response system and must be developed intentionally to incorporate youth. The coordinated community plan must address how the CoC will ensure that the coordinated entry process is youth-appropriate.