



# CARES and ARPA Funded Food Security Efforts in Alexandria VA

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COG FARM Committee Meeting

October 8, 2021

# Goals of the CARES Funded Food Security Activities

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Increase

Access to healthy food and  
needed resources

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Strengthen

Efficacy of hunger response  
activities

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Improve

Planning and collaboration  
among partners

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Reduce

Risk of exposure during  
pandemic

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Provide

Information and outreach  
materials

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# Key Food Security Activities



Large scale distribution events by ALIVE! twice monthly—8,000 residents monthly



Pop-up distributions by ALIVE! and partners in key areas of greater need/limited access—1000+ residents monthly



Home delivery of groceries/frozen meals to older adults, quarantining, and at-risk families—1,500+ residents monthly (ALIVE! and Senior Services of Alexandria Meals on Wheels)



Support for pantries—1,000 residents monthly (ALIVE!, faith partners, and organizations)



Provision of food to families quarantining in hotels (ALIVE!)



Distribution of masks and other health and safety items during large-scale distribution efforts



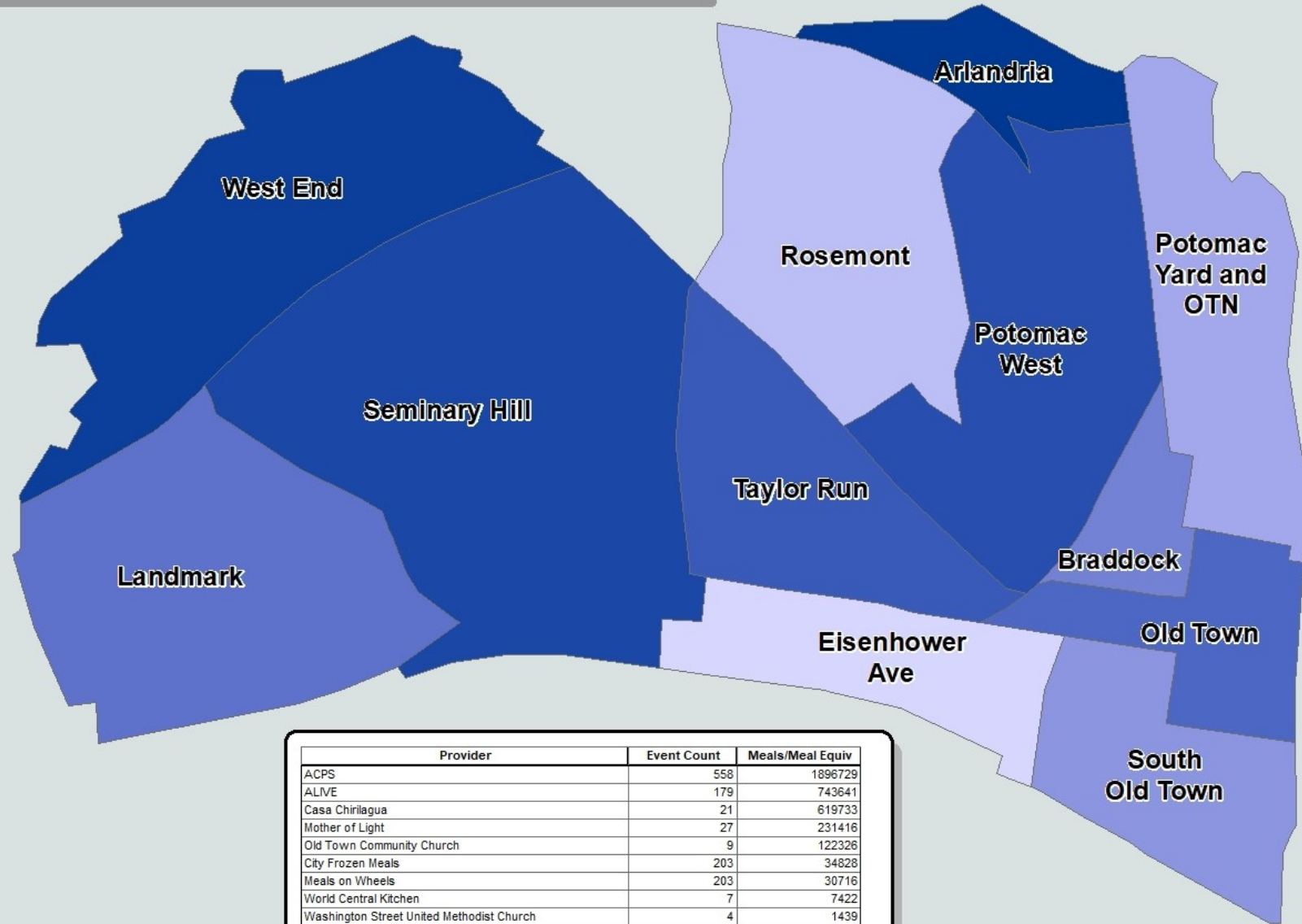
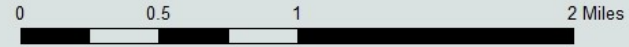
Mapping need and distribution



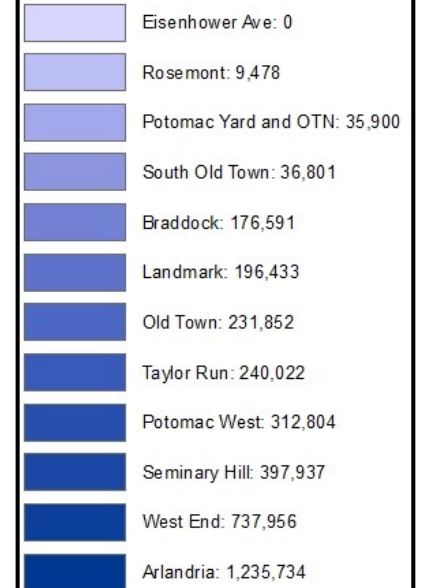
Grocery Gift Card Distribution and Resilience Fund (ACT)

# Total COVID-19 Food Distribution Through 12/4/20 - Meals and Meal Equivalents by Neighborhood

City of Alexandria, Virginia



## Meals Distributed



Total (Including Non-Spatial Data): 3,689,260



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Provider	Event Count	Meals/Meal Equiv
ACPS	558	1896729
ALIVE	179	743641
Casa Chirilagua	21	619733
Mother of Light	27	231416
Old Town Community Church	9	122326
City Frozen Meals	203	34828
Meals on Wheels	203	30716
World Central Kitchen	7	7422
Washington Street United Methodist Church	4	1439
Royal Restaurant	2	1010

Mapping Standards:  
Coordinate System - NAD83 State Plane Virginia North  
Projection - Lambert Conformal Conic  
Map Units - Feet

This map was produced by the GIS Division of the  
Information Technology Services Department,  
City of Alexandria, VA

Produced by: Eli Smith  
December 7, 2020



# ALX Cares Grocery Gift Card Program

- City of Alexandria contracted with ACT to provide grocery gift cards to eligible individuals and families through trusted partners
- Operated for six months: July 2020 to December 2020
- 3,034 families applied for the ALX Cares program
- 2,326 families received gift cards, which included 3,734 children
- 7,412 grocery gift cards were distributed
- \$2,519,000 was provided in grocery gift cards

# ALX Cares Participant Information

Recipients were cost-burdened and struggling to afford basic needs, a challenge that Covid-19 had exacerbated

- 82% made less than \$25,000 per year, well below 50% Area Median Income

- 31% were receiving unemployment insurance

- 22% received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits

- 83% ran out of food routinely in the prior 12 months

# ARPA Funded Food Security/Economic Mobility Efforts



Alexandria  
Community  
Access and  
Emergency  
Support  
Grant Program

- Navigation support to ensure individuals are enrolled in key local, state and federal programs for which they are eligible
- Provide tangible and emergency financial aid that will include grocery gift cards, transportation assistance, childcare, and rental assistance
- Trusted non-profit organizations will be selected through a grants process



## Food Security System Advancement

- Creation of Food Security position to support city-wide efforts to combat food insecurity
- Establishment of two community food hubs in the West End and in Arlandria
- Large scale food distributions will occur monthly (increases will occur if indicated)
- Continued support of pantry network, quarantine food, food delivery for seniors and ongoing operations

# Food Resource Center/Food Hub Concept

## Key Components:

- Client centered and accessible
- Choice in foods
- Help clients access/navigate other available services (city or private)
- Neighborhood space/co-located with other services
- Offered at times that are convenient for clients

## Consultation with participants and partners on:

- Data collection and shared information
- Hours and location
- Rubric for how much and often people receive food
- What public services should be co-located and how often made available

Alexandria  
Guaranteed  
Income Pilot:  
ARISE

Monthly cash transfer of \$500

(pre-loaded debit card/direct deposit)

150+ families for 24 months

Case management, benefits  
counseling, other supports

Key Research component--assess the  
program's impact, informing policy changes



Additional ARPA  
Projects  
Supporting  
Economic  
Mobility

Re-employment and Upskilling  
Project

Unified Early Childhood Workforce  
Stabilization Initiative

Rental Resiliency

Bridging the Digital Divide



## Key Elements of Success and Expansion

Partnerships,  
Partnerships,  
Partnerships

Agility and flexibility

Strong and ongoing  
communication

Absence of turf and  
desire for credit

Tremendous support  
from Mayor, City  
Council, City Manager,  
Community at large

Ability to address the  
crisis while eyes on  
the prize of long-term  
system transformation