

# City of Alexandria Demographic Profile

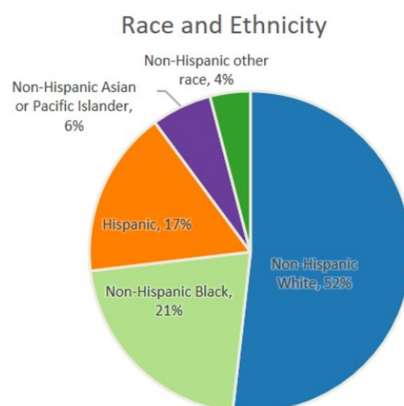
## A BRIEF OVERVIEW

### THE CITY IS GROWING:

Alexandria is an urban area of 15 square miles within the Washington, DC metropolitan region. Over the last decade, Alexandria's population has grown 12.2% to 159,467 residents.



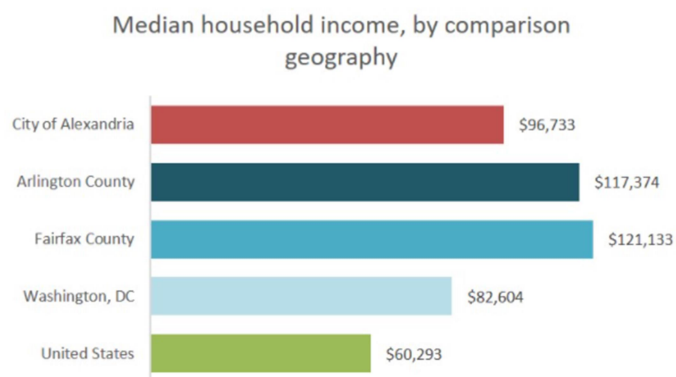
**THE CITY IS DIVERSE:** Currently, approximately half of Alexandria residents identify as White alone (52%), while over one-fifth identify as Black or African American alone (21%). Nearly 17% identify as Hispanic or Latino, while 6% identify as Asian alone. Four percent identify as two or more races, while less than one percent identified as another race alone, American Indian or Native Alaskan alone, or Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.



Sources: US Census Bureau 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates

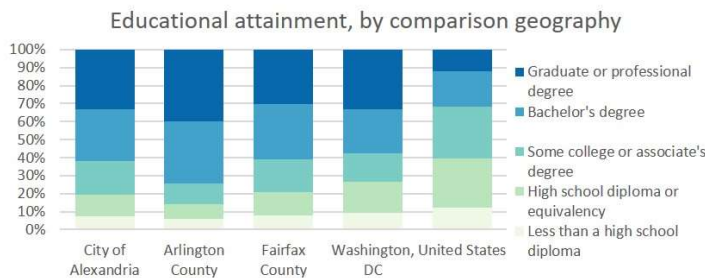
### CITY RESIDENTS EARN MUCH HIGHER INCOMES THAN THE

**U.S. AVERAGE:** Alexandria's median household income is \$102,284 (this is the 2019 figure; the chart at right is from 2018), and its median family income is \$167,322. These figures are well above the national average but lag behind other metropolitan DC suburbs.

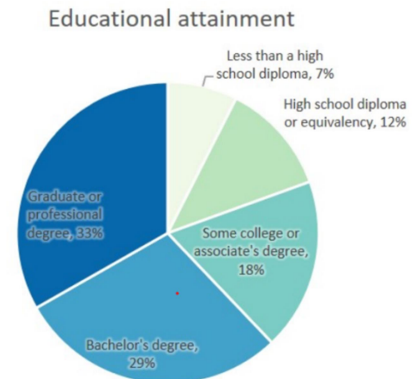


Sources: US Census Bureau 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates

**CITY RESIDENTS ARE WELL-EDUCATED:** The majority of Alexandria residents over the age of 25 – 62% – have a Bachelor’s, Graduate, or Professional Degree. These numbers are roughly comparable to surrounding jurisdictions but much higher than the national average. Ninety-three percent of Alexandrians have a high school degree or higher.



Sources: US Census Bureau 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates

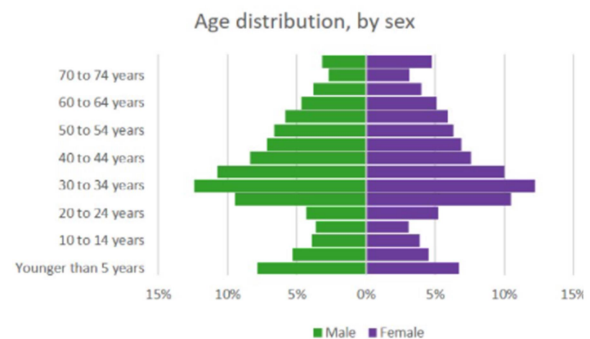


Sources: US Census Bureau 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates

**CHILDREN AGES 5-14 AND SENIORS ARE GROWING QUICKLY:** Approximately one third of Alexandria residents are between the ages of 25 and 39, and the median age for Alexandria residents is 36.5, which is lower than the national average.

The average rate of growth for the City is 12%; if age cohorts increase at a rate significantly faster than that, we can expect higher proportions of them in the overall population. There are two age trends to watch in Alexandria:

- Those aged 10 to 14 grew 39% from 2010 to 2019 – or more than three times the rate of growth of the entire City. The group of children aged 5 to 9 also increased, but only at a rate of 17%.
- Residents aged 55 to 74 saw an increase of 25%, or twice the rate of growth of the entire City.



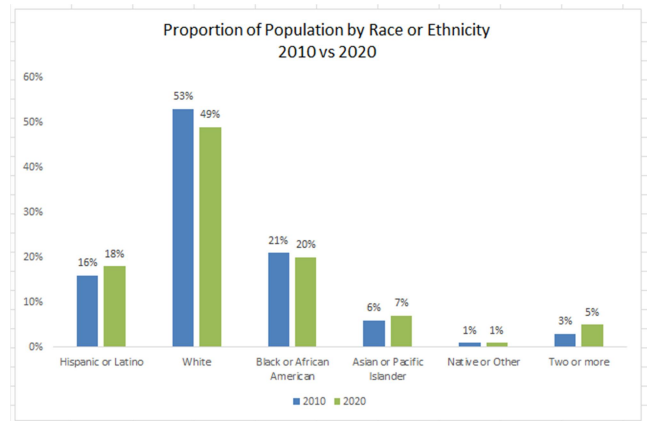
Sources: US Census Bureau 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates

## DIGGING DEEPER

Digging a bit deeper into the data reveals more demographic complexities, as well as significant racial and ethnic disparities in indicators of wellbeing.

### THE CITY'S RACIAL AND ETHNIC

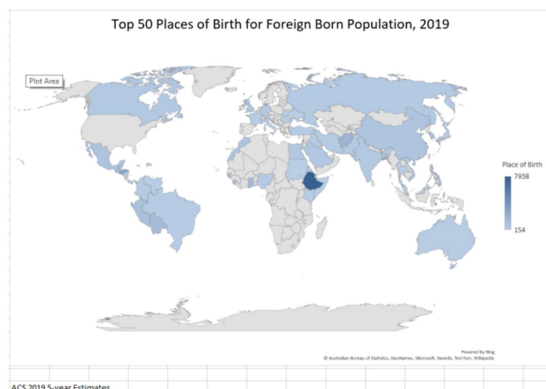
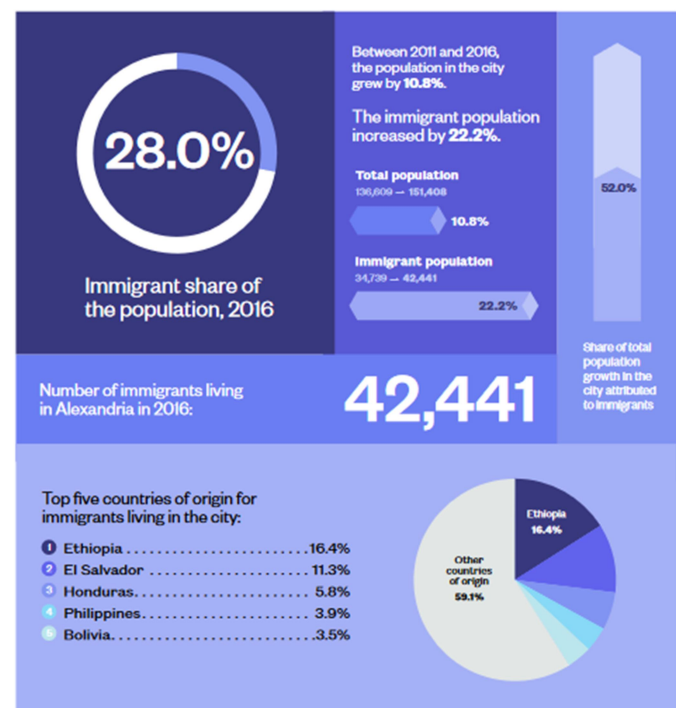
**MAKEUP IS CHANGING:** A comparison of 2010 and 2020 Census data shows that the proportion of White residents in the City is declining, while there are increases in three groups: Hispanic/Latinos; Asian/Pacific Islanders; and people of two or more races. The percentage of Black/African Americans remains relatively steady.



Source: 2020 and 2010 U.S. Census

The City's immigrant population has increased by nearly one-quarter. As of 2019, 27.2% percent of the City's residents were born outside the US. Broadly speaking, one-third of Alexandria immigrants come from Latin America, mainly from El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala; another third were born in Africa, the majority of which are Ethiopian; and one-fifth hail from Asia, with over two in five journeying from South Central Asia.

### POPULATION GROWTH



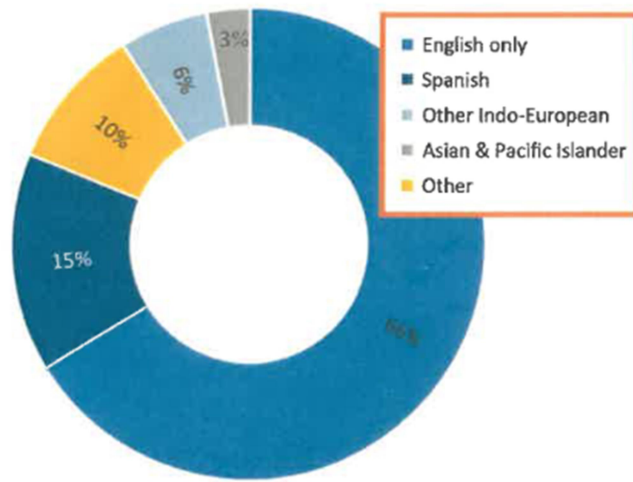
One way to gain insight into potential demographic trends is to look at who makes up the current population of K-12 students. As of September 30, 2020, the following racial/ethnic groups comprised the ACPS student body:

Racial/Ethnic Group	Percentage of Students
Asian	5.5%
Black	25.8%
Hispanic	36.9%
White	28.1%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	<1%
Native American	<1%
Multi-racial	3.3%

<https://www.acps.k12.va.us/domain/1030>

**MORE LANGUAGES ARE BEING SPOKEN IN ALEXANDRIA:** One-third (33.5%) speak a language other than English at home. One-eighth, or 12.1%, of all Alexandria residents – nearly 18,000 people – say they speak English “less than very well.” In terms of foreign-born Alexandria residents, about half (45%) say they speak English “less than very well.”

Languages Spoken at Home



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates - Public Use Microdata Sample 2018

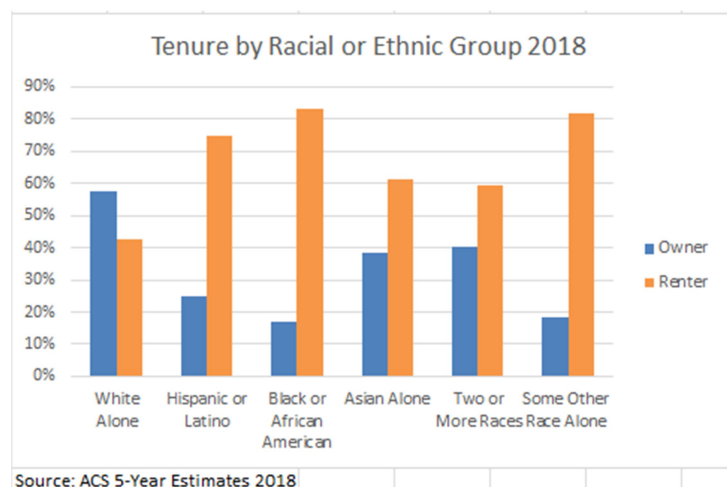
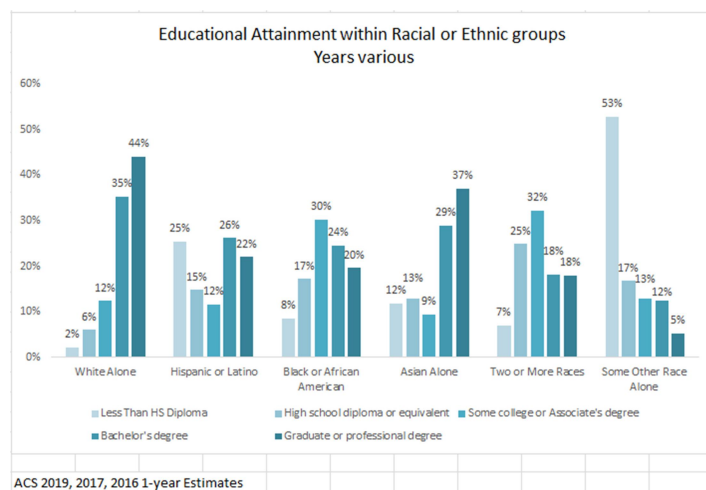
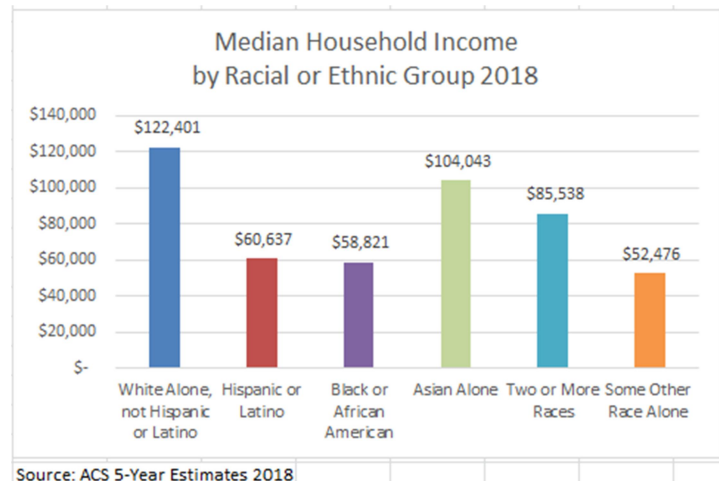
Language Group	Total	% of City Population	% of LEP Households
Spanish	21,620	14%	30%
Amharic	7,441	5%	n/a
Arabic	3,494	2%	35%
French	1,821	1%	3%
Tagalog	1,227	1%	0%
Korean	1,024	1%	52%
Chinese	551	0%	21%
Foreign born	43,362	26%	-

## OPPORTUNITY GAPS BY RACE, ETHNICITY, AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY:

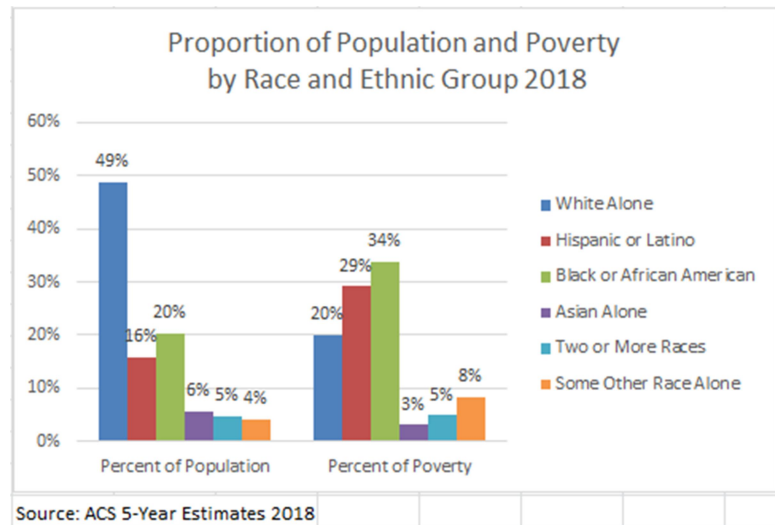
At the same time that the City's racial and ethnic demographics shift, new ways of looking at data reveal stark differences in income, education level, rates of poverty, and home ownership levels based upon the color of one's skin. For instance,

- The median income for White households was more than double that of Hispanic/Latino and Black/African American households.
- Hispanic/Latino residents were 5 times less likely to have a high school degree or less than a high school degree than Whites; Black/African Americans and Asians were about 4 times less likely.
- While close to 60% of Whites owned their homes, fewer than 20% of Black/African Americans did. Over 80% of Black/African Americans and more than 70% of Hispanic/Latinos rented their homes, while only 40% of White householders did so. Home ownership is a cornerstone of wealth building, particularly so in Alexandria, where the mean housing value is \$572,900.

A family's income, its levels of educational attainment, and its rates of home ownership all contribute to the accumulation of generational wealth, which is where the most egregious disparities in life assets and indicators of well-being can be seen.



These trends are also reflected in the City's poverty rates. While Whites make up about half of the population, they are impoverished at a rate of only 1 in 5. While Latinos make up only 16% of the City's population, they account for almost double that number – 29% – of the people who live in poverty. And Black/African Americans comprise 20% of the City's population but over one-third of those in poverty.

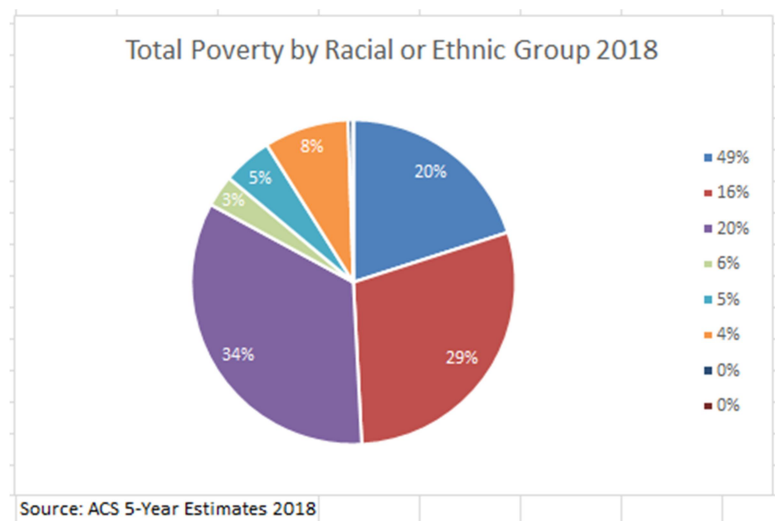


These inequities are also aggravated by a resident's citizenship status: The median income for all Alexandria residents in 2016, the latest this data was available, was \$89,200. Foreign-born, naturalized citizens averaged \$63,348, while non-citizen Alexandrians earned \$46,788.

## POVERTY IN ALEXANDRIA

**IS REAL:** According to 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) data, 10.3% of Alexandria residents live below the poverty line, though 16.7% of Alexandria immigrants live in poverty (this number includes both naturalized citizens and non-citizens; the numbers for undocumented Alexandria residents is higher).

However, the rate of poverty in Alexandria is below the poverty rate in Virginia. In addition, the number of people experiencing homelessness in Alexandria has dropped over the past five years to 207, a 7.6% decrease from 2016-2020.



**18.8% of the City's children live below the poverty line**



## THE WEALTH GAP IS GROWING...

The gap between rich and poor has been growing in recent years. Data from the 2006-2010 American Community Survey show that 8% of Alexandria families with children under 18 lived below the poverty line; by 2019 that number has risen to 13%. In total, as of 2019, 18.8% of the City's children live below the poverty line.

## ... AND WILL CONTINUE TO

**GROW DUE TO COVID-19:** Almost 11% of Alexandria residents do not have health insurance, and 42% of foreign-born non-citizen residents are also uninsured. This is particularly devastating considering the disproportionate health and economic impacts that COVID-19 has had on communities of color.

The first two charts at right highlight the disparate health impacts that COVID-19. While Whites make up about half of the City's population, they were only a quarter of those who contracted COVID. Conversely, Latinos, who comprise 17% of the City's numbers, accounted for almost one third of cases. The death rates are even more stark: again, over half of Alexandria residents are White, yet they account for only 21% of deaths, while Latinos accounted for more than one third.

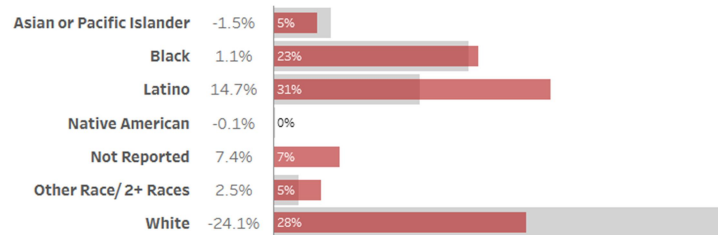
The last chart shows the disproportionate economic effect on COVID on communities of color, whose members often are front-line workers not eligible for telework and at times sick leave and/or health insurance. Members of such groups are also more likely to live in congregant housing, where COVID can spread much more easily.

It is very likely that the economic impacts of COVID will only serve to deepen the City's existing inequities.

## COVID-19 Cases by Demographics Groups

Percent of Total Cases by Group Compared to Alexandria Population

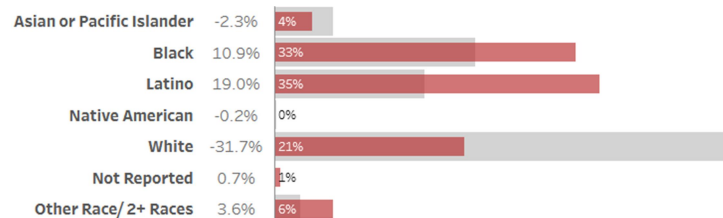
The data was updated on 10/5/2021.



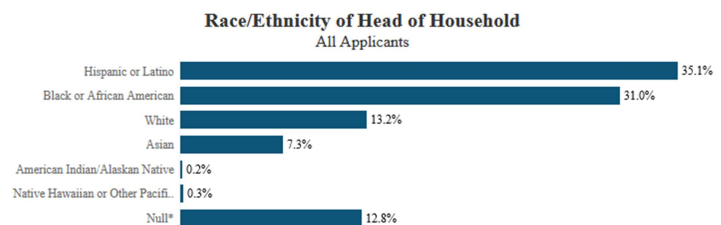
## COVID-19 Hospitalizations by Demographics Groups

Percent of Total Hospitalizations by Group Compared to Alexandria Population

The data was updated on 10/5/2021.

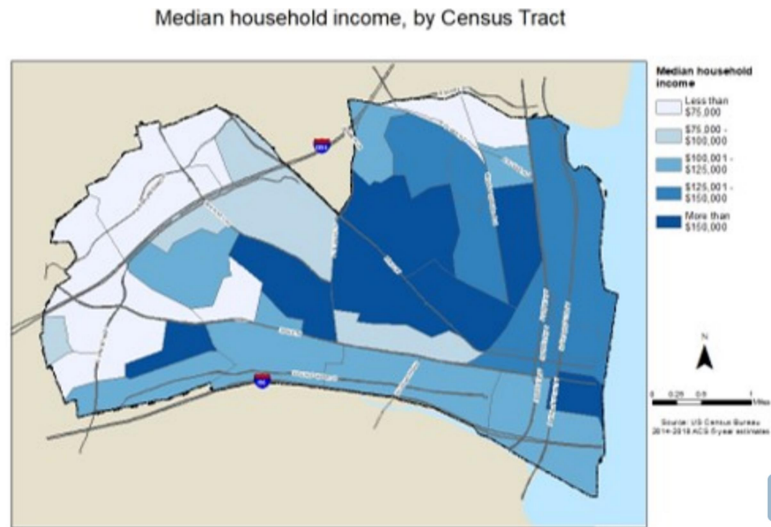


## COVID-19 Emergency Rent Relief Assistance Program

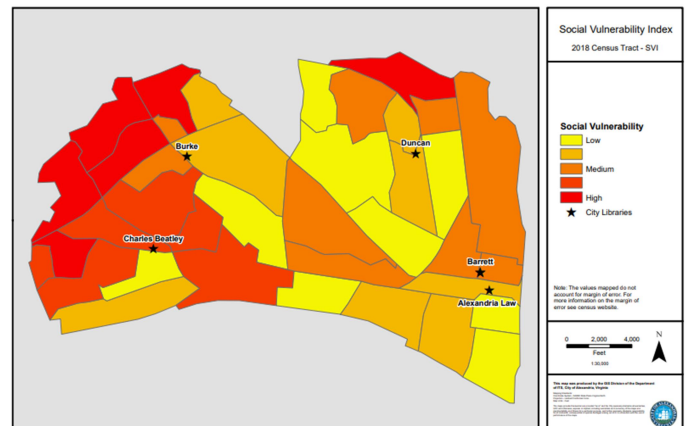
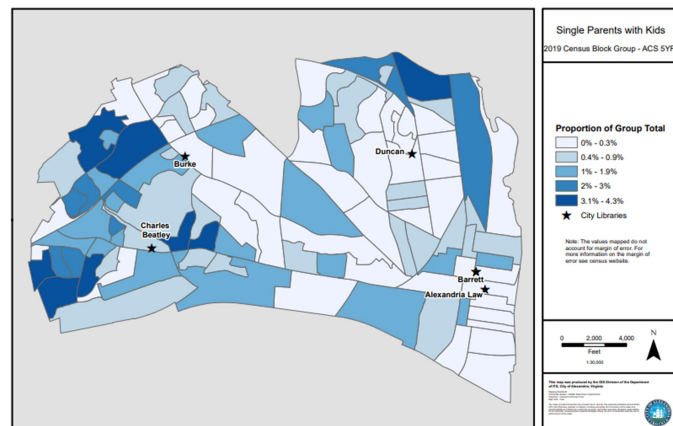
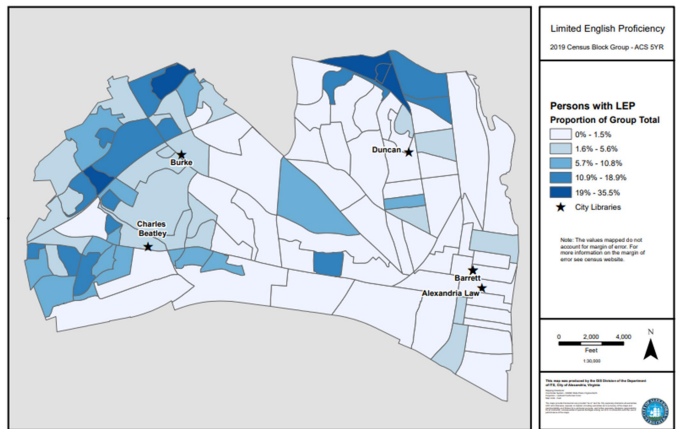
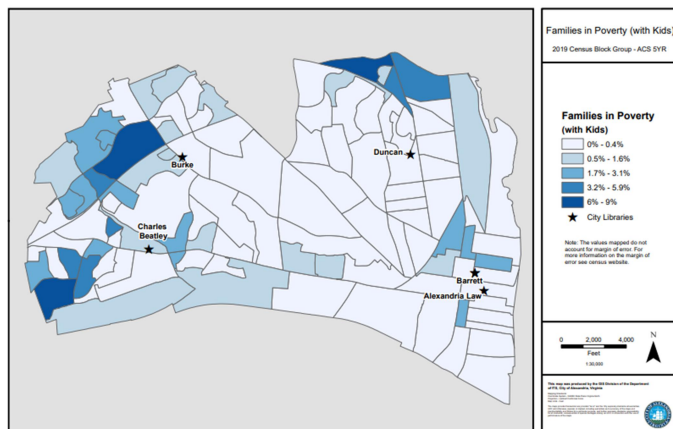


\*Applicants are not required to supply their Race/Ethnicity

**WHICH AREAS WITHIN THE CITY ARE STRUGGLING THE MOST?** Graphic illustrations of this data show that positive life outcomes occur in some parts of the City, while negative outcomes happen in others. First, we can see where the money goes to:



Now, we can see the areas that have higher rates of poverty, higher numbers of residents with limited English proficiency, and higher risks on the social vulnerability index. Note the highlighted areas below are the inverse of the image above:





## ***WHAT IMPLICATIONS DOES THIS DATA HAVE FOR LIBRARY SERVICES?***

Several themes can be teased out from the data discussed above:

**EQUITY:** As the previous 5-Year Plan demographic description notes, “Overall, this data tells us that the Alexandria Library serves a community of predominately young professionals and ‘baby boomers,’ many who are highly educated and with a comfortable household income.” This may be true to a certain extent, but new data sheds light on the disparities within the City of Alexandria that have long been overlooked, with opportunity gaps between groups continuing to widen. This data lends additional urgency to the library’s mission to proactively address historic equity gaps through the programs, services, and collections it offers to the public.

**LANGUAGE ACCESS:** Given the increasing need for information in a number of languages, the library can work to improve programs, services, and collections for limited English proficient residents. Posting multilingual signage and extending a warm welcome to speakers of languages other than English are important to ensuring a truly public library for all users.

**AGE:** There were two notable increases in the proportion of certain age groups relative to the entire City population:

- Those aged 10 to 14 grew more than three times the rate of the rest of Alexandria. In the last 5-Year Plan, facilitating school readiness was a noted goal. Now that that age cohort is getting older, perhaps the library would consider strengthening partnerships with local schools or providing additional homework help options.
- Meanwhile, residents aged 55 to 74 increased at rate double that of the City. Again, as the previous demographic description noted, “This is a group with changing needs, many of which may be served by the library. Some may be entering retirement with more time for recreational pursuits. Some may be seeking second careers or volunteer opportunities. Some may be very familiar with technology and be early adopters with disposable income, while others may struggle with new technology trends in our services.”

**TARGETING SPECIFIC GEOGRAPHIC AREAS WITHIN ALEXANDRIA:** Geospatial maps provide guidance on where to target services to the specific populations that need them most, allowing the library to provide tailored programming at branches with limited English proficient communities or households with young children, for instance.

**LONG-TERM IMPACTS OF COVID-19:** All Alexandria residents, as well as the larger global community, will need help grappling with the massive economic, health, social, and psychological impacts of COVID long after the pandemic is no longer an all-consuming threat. Given the disproportionate impacts on communities of color, the library can ensure that offerings that address job skills training, rebuilding finances, dealing with long-haul COVID, and/or improving emotional wellbeing, for example, consider the needs of these particular groups in a culturally competent manner and with appropriate language access. COVID-19 laid bare the digital divide between those with technological access and those without; the library can also play a role in closing that gap.