

An Initial Assessment of California's Homeless Emergency Aid Program

A Presentation to the California Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council

March 25, 2020

Arturo Baiocchi, PhD

Susanna Curry, PhD, MSW

California State University, Sacramento Division of Social Work

Institute for Social Research

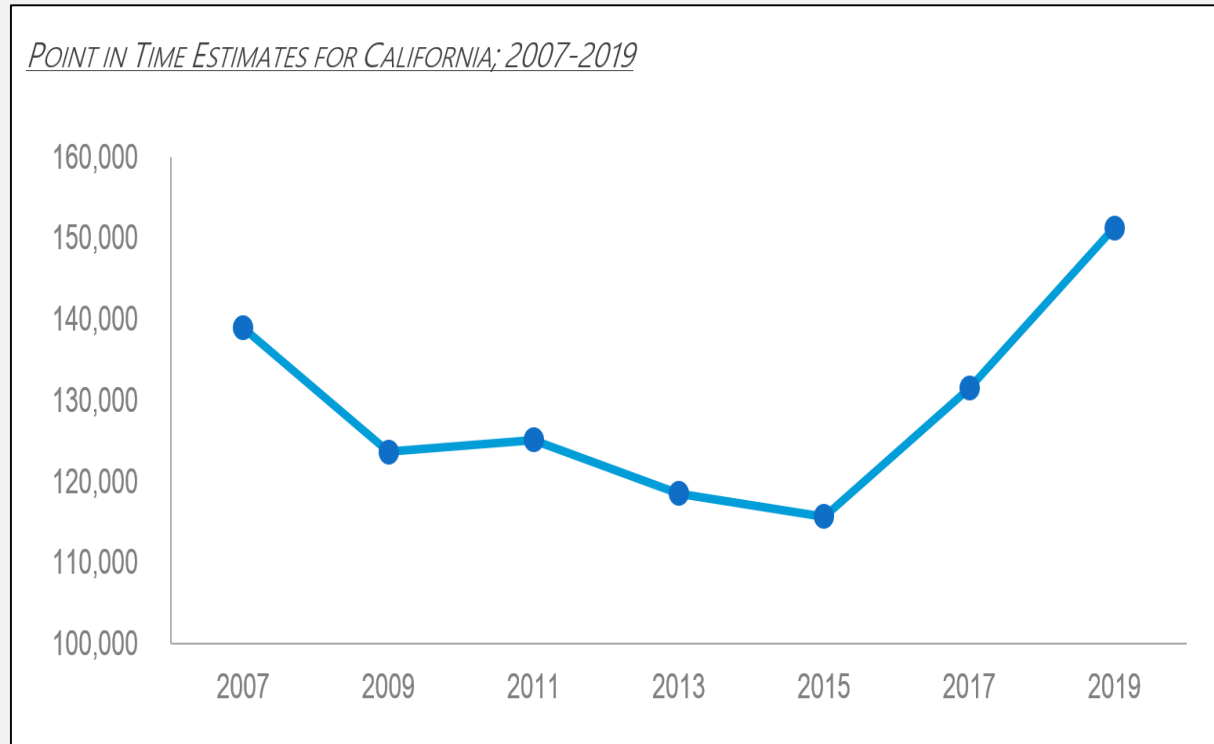


ROAD MAP

- ① Background and Purpose
- ② Key Findings
- ③ Recommendations and Conclusion
- ④ Q & A

BACKGROUND

Substantial rise in homelessness in California, particularly in past four years



BACKGROUND

- CA State legislature passed SB 850 in 2018
- \$500 million in one-time funding through Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP)
 - 70% of funds to CoCs
 - 30% of funds to 11 large cities

METHODOLOGY

- HCFC commissioned CSUS to conduct an initial assessment of HEAP planning and implementation
 - 20 in-depth interviews (out of 54 jurisdictions)
 - 40 survey responses
 - Application review

BACKGROUND

- Our report describes...
 - The variety of programs and innovative practices funded by HEAP in the first year
 - Overarching strategies used by communities
 - Early successes and challenges
 - Our recommendations

BACKGROUND

- Please keep in mind...
 - An independent study
 - Not intended to be an evaluation of the *outcomes or impact* of HEAP
 - Intended to help inform ongoing evaluation and planning decisions

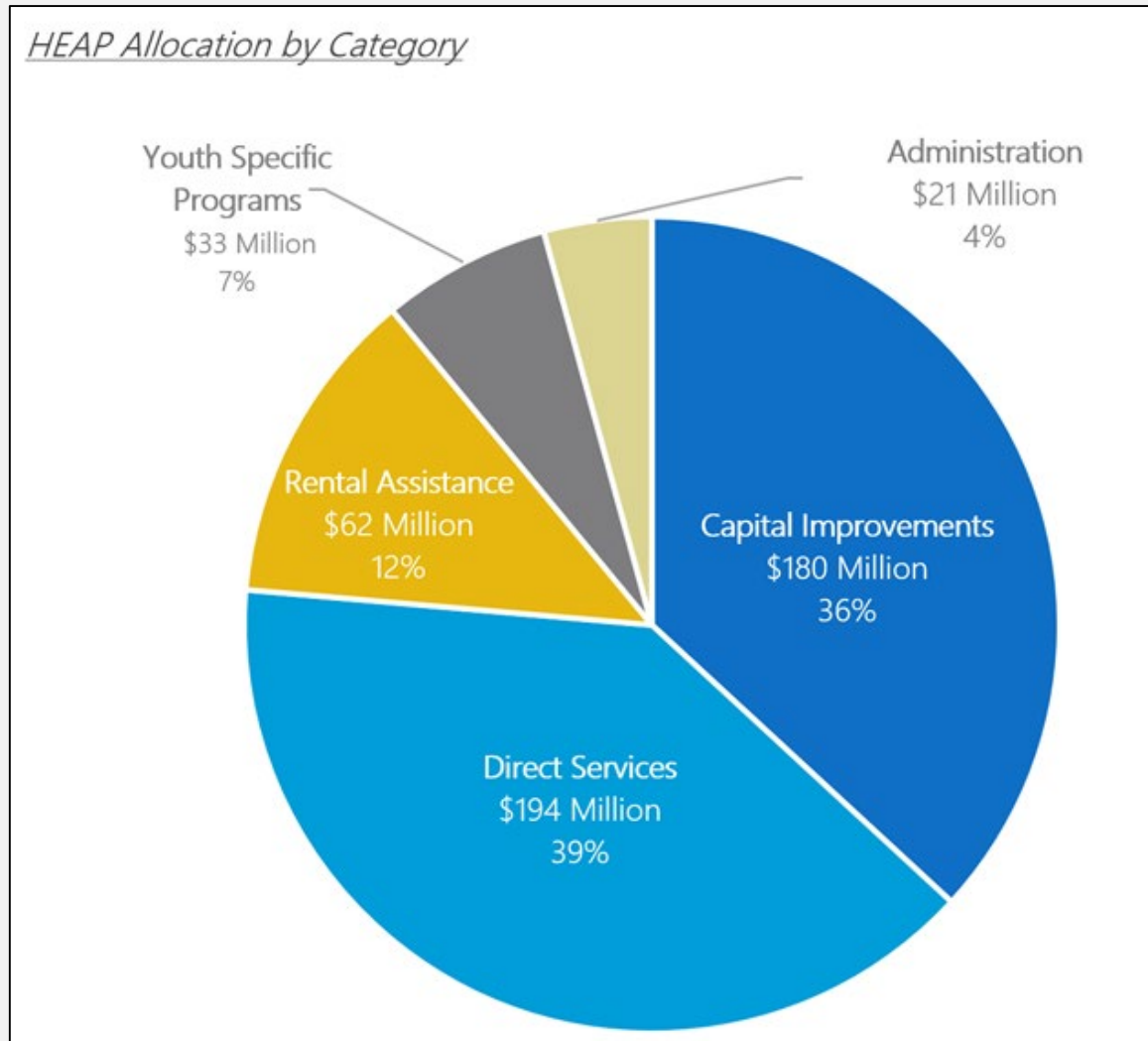
OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

HOW ARE GRANTEES SPENDING HEAP FUNDS?

Four main categories

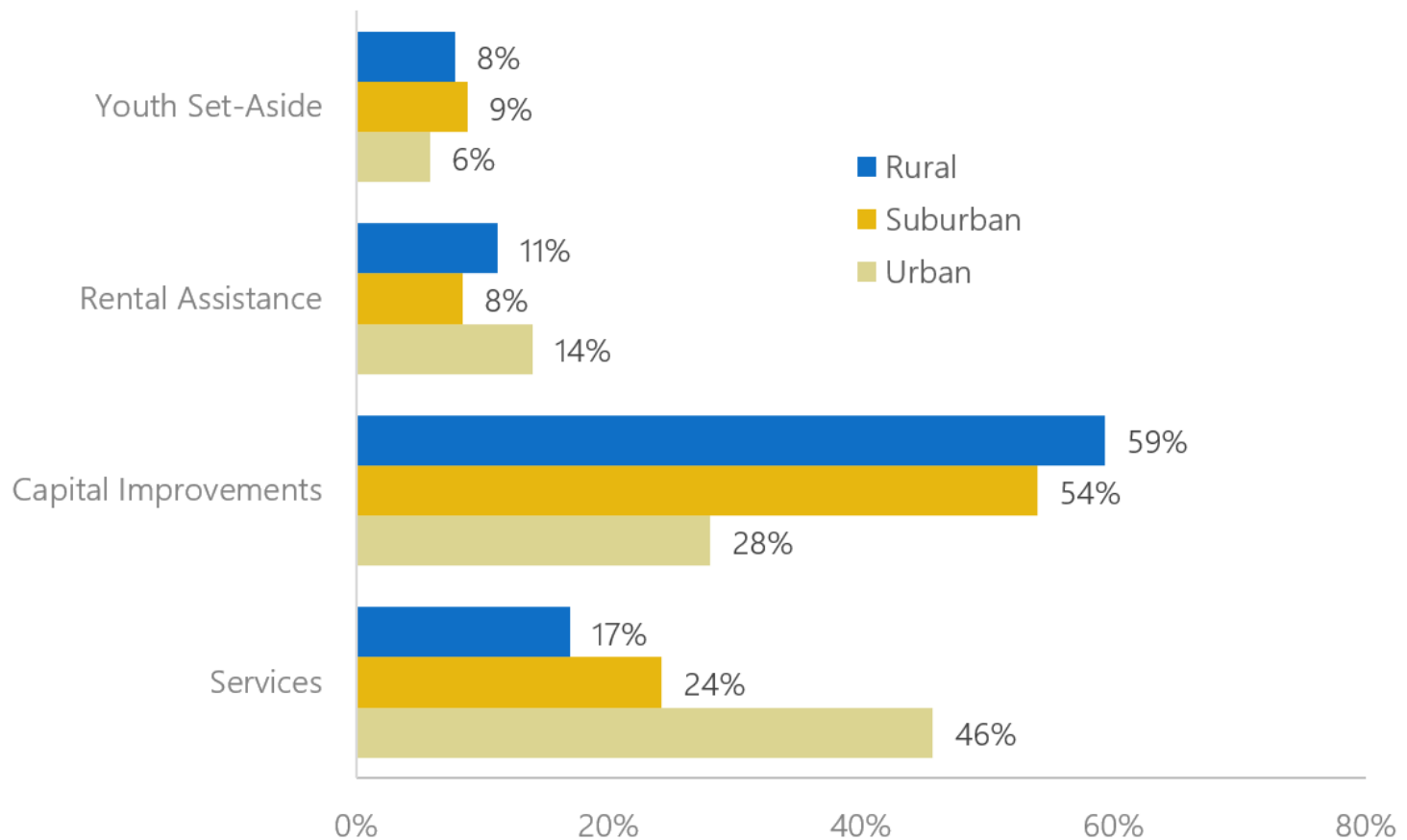
- Services
- Capital improvement
- Rental assistance
- Youth set-aside

The largest proportion of funds were allocated to **direct services** to help Californians either avoid or exit homelessness

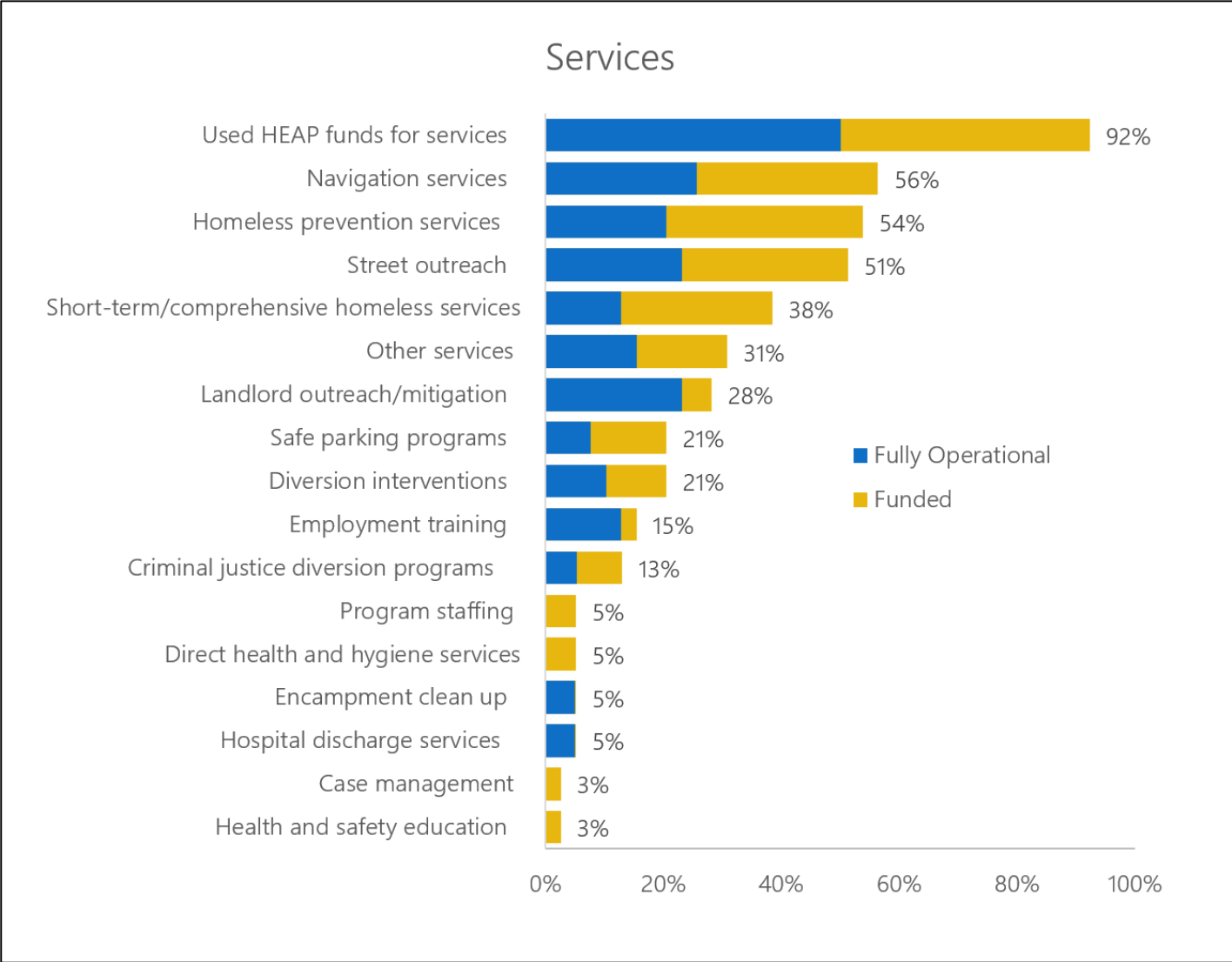


Urban, suburban and rural communities varied in their HEAP allocations, particularly with respect to capital investments and services

PLANNED FUNDS BY CATEGORY AMONG URBAN AND NON-URBAN JURISDICTIONS



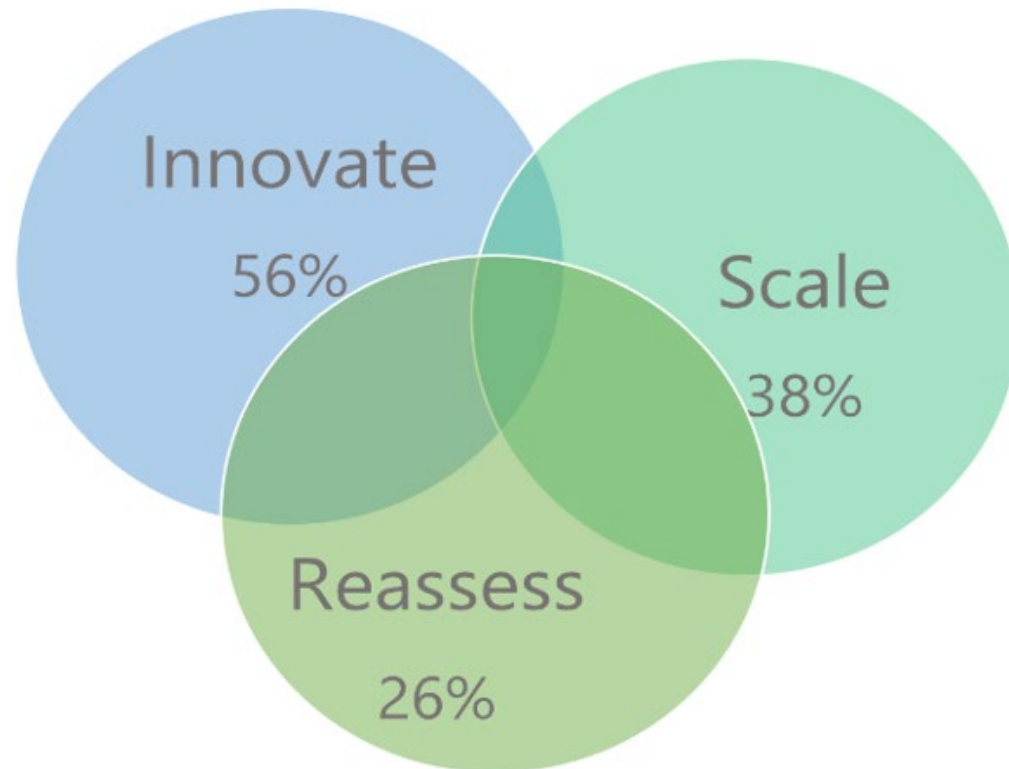
Almost all communities (92%) reported that they had allocated some portion of their HEAP grant to support **direct services**



- Approximately 87% of communities reported using HEAP funds for **capital investments**
- 85% of communities planned or allocated HEAP funds to support a variety of rental assistance programs

STRATEGIES

HEAP FUNDING STRATEGIES



LESSONS LEARNED

- Initial distrust of the flexibility of HEAP
- Collaborative planning described as “a big lift”
- Challenges associated with shelter declaration requirement
- Delays in capital investment projects

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Avoid single metric to measure success
 - Reduce harm associated with homelessness
 - Reduce time homeless
 - Prevent homelessness
- Additional technical assistance needed

RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is very likely that some innovative models will result in better outcomes than others—though it is unclear how results and impacts can be assessed across these different contexts
- Therefore HCFC should support...
 - Evaluations at the local level
 - Help identify successful models and best practices
 - Workshops and/or small learning communities
 - Disseminate innovative uses of state funds

THANK YOU

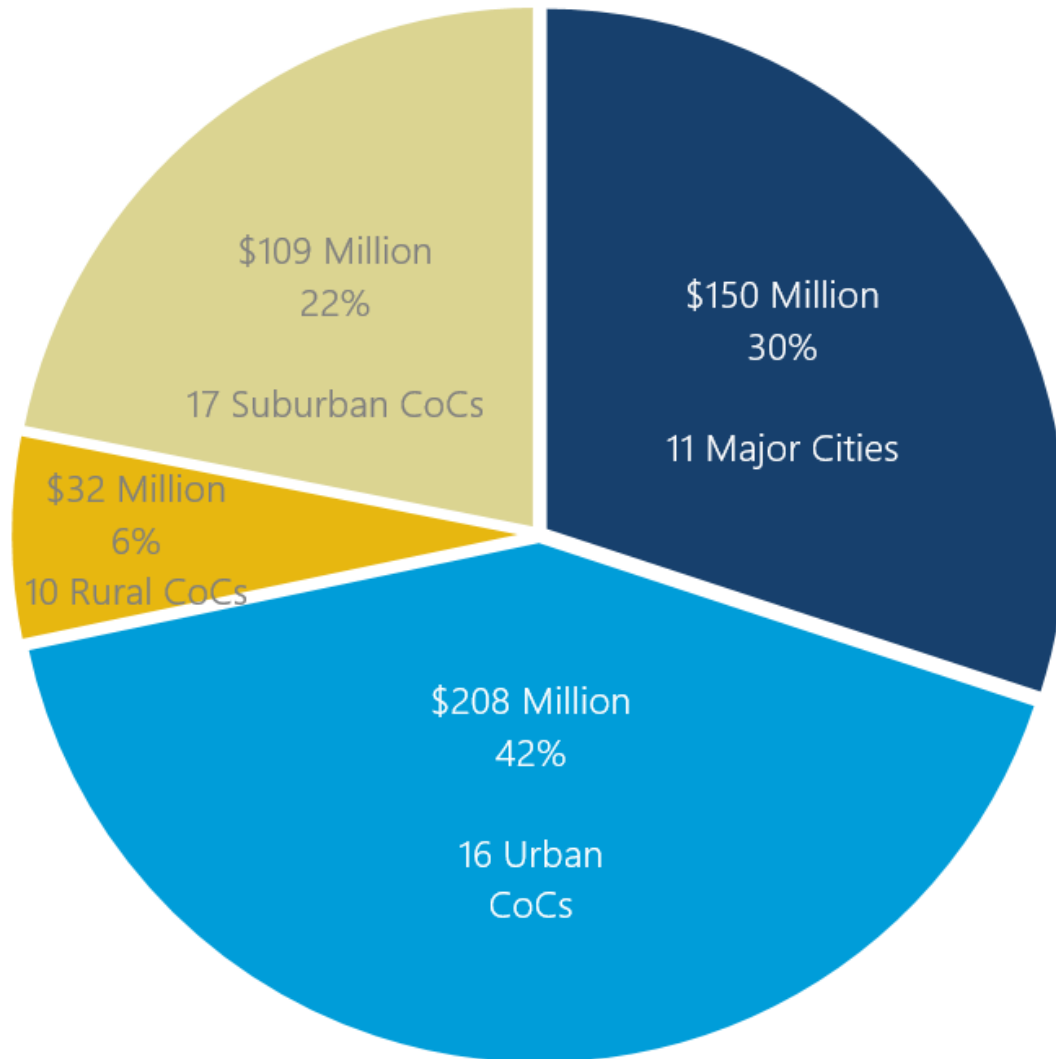
Dr. Arturo Baiocchi: arturo.baiocchi@csus.edu

Dr. Susanna Curry: curry@csus.edu

Thank you to Jessica Newham and Fleur Marfori for their contributions to this report

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE SLIDES

HEAP ALLOCATION BY TYPE OF COC



Large cities collectively allocated a substantially larger proportion (45%) toward capital investments compared to CoCs (32%).

