Fairfax Gardens HOPE VI Evaluation—First annual report

December 2013

Prepared for the Taunton Housing Authority

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In July 2012, the UMass Dartmouth Urban Initiative, which serves as the evaluator for Taunton’s HOPE VI project, issued a report on the status of HOPE VI residents, the neighborhood surrounding the Fairfax Gardens housing development, and the city of Taunton in order to document conditions at the start of this project. Methods to do this included aggregating and analyzing data collected by the Taunton Housing Authority (THA), the US Census Bureau, and other secondary sources; conducting evaluator-administered surveys among HOPE VI households and neighborhood residents; and interviewing key stakeholders to learn more about the context in which this project was being conducted.

This first annual report serves as an update to many of those findings, indicating the degree to which THA and its partners are on track to achieving the goals of HOPE VI: improved outcomes for residents of the former Fairfax Gardens development in the areas of housing and neighborhood quality, health, child development, and economic self-sufficiency, and neighborhood improvements resulting from the redevelopment of distressed public housing.

While this HOPE VI project has only been fully operational for just over one year, several resident-level changes are already becoming apparent. Neighborhood-level changes have yet to be reflected by the data, much of which is only current enough to describe conditions at the start of site redevelopment. Nevertheless, anecdotal evidence suggests that housing quality in the neighborhood around Fairfax Gardens has already begun to improve as neighbors make new investments in their homes and properties.

Key findings – HOPE VI residents

- One of the most significant changes present among residents is the major increase in employment—the number of employed individuals has gone from 41 to 80 in the past year.
- Increased employment has resulted in a major shift in HOPE VI households’ primary income source: at baseline, 49 percent relied on public assistance (TANF) as their primary source of income; now, 50 percent earn most of their income through employment.
- Transportation continues to be a major obstacle to employment, because residents without reliable transportation cannot access jobs and/or childcare so that they can enter the workforce. THA has been working to address this through the provision of bus passes for residents who are working, participating in job training, or attending school, but the bus schedule does not always correspond to residents’ traveling needs.
- Interviewees and focus group participants continually cited the positive impact of THA case managers in easing the relocation process and connecting them with services and opportunities.
- While more HOPE VI households have relocated to neighborhoods with higher concentrations of poverty than Fairfax Gardens, the majority live in neighborhoods where the poverty rate is less than 20 percent.
Key findings – Neighborhood

- Because the data sources of many of the indicators used to measure neighborhood impacts only provide information through 2011 and 2012, the evaluation team considers the information provided in this report to represent a more accurate portrayal of baseline conditions before site redevelopment began.

- The number of businesses surrounding Parcel 6A (now being developed as Lenox Green) has declined since baseline, from 1,417 to 1,235. Sectors that decreased significantly include construction, manufacturing, transportation, and warehousing.

- Updated data contained in this report more accurately reflects the impact of the housing crash on the neighborhood surrounding Fairfax Gardens.
1.0 OVERVIEW

1.1 Annual report overview

The evaluation of Taunton Housing Authority’s HOPE VI project is now concluding its second year. Since the UMass Dartmouth Urban Initiative issued its baseline report in July 2012, it has been working with Taunton Housing Authority (THA) staff to obtain data on HOPE VI households, conducting qualitative research through interviews and focus groups, and updating metrics used to assess the impact of this project on the neighborhood surrounding the two development sites (the former Fairfax Gardens on DeWert Avenue and Parcel 6A on Mason Street).

This report updates much of the data analyzed in last year’s baseline report, and it also integrates elements of a formative (or process) evaluation aimed at providing THA and its partners with information that will allow them to redouble or redirect interventions in order to accomplish the long-term goals of the HOPE VI project.

1.2 Site & development overview

A core component of the HOPE VI model is demolition of distressed public housing. As documented in the baseline report, the 60+ year-old Fairfax Gardens development not only met the threshold for distress set forth by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development; HOPE VI households surveyed by the evaluation team reported significant problems in their individual units related to the development’s age and disrepair.

The demolition of Fairfax Gardens began in June 2012, after which point construction began on DeWert Avenue to turn the site into Bristol Commons, a development with 88 townhouses and three new streets, including Fairground Avenue that now connects Kilmer Avenue to Shores Street. This represents a reduction in density, as Fairfax Gardens included 150 apartments. As of November 2013, Bristol Commons was 80 percent complete, and leasing of units began at the Shores Street duplexes in September. Meanwhile, construction of Lenox Green, a 72-apartment development on a brownfield along Mason Street, is 70 percent complete as of November 2013. That site is on track for completion in early 2014.

1.3 Definitions

**HOPE VI residents:** refers to original residents of Fairfax Gardens who are part of the HOPE VI caseload.

**THA:** Taunton Housing Authority

**Fairfax Gardens neighborhood:** Generally defined as the area surrounding the former Fairfax Gardens development. Depending on the availability of data, this may mean just the area within a one-mile radius (based on geographic coordinates of 41.118’ N, 71.118’ W) or the set of census tracts that fall entirely or partially within the one-mile radius. This report will specify which distinction applies as necessary.

**Census tracts:** When referred to collectively, this means tracts 6133, 6134, 6138, 6139.01, and 6140. See Appendix A for a map of these tracts.

**Evaluation team:** Refers to the Urban Initiative staff.
2.0 HOPE VI RESIDENTS – UPDATED DATA & ANALYSIS

2.1 Overview of purpose, methods, sources

In last year’s report on baseline data, the evaluation team used data and surveys collected by THA along with Urban Initiative-administered surveys to profile HOPE VI residents’ demographics, socioeconomic status, civic engagement, children, household-identified needs, health, conditions of and satisfaction with housing and neighborhoods, and neighborhood conditions upon relocation.

In this first annual report, the evaluation team has updated and contrasted the baseline data with new information collected and provided by THA. Because the evaluation team’s own surveying will not be repeated until the end of the HOPE VI project, updates are not available in each of the baseline report’s focus areas. However, the evaluation team has spent the year conducting 25 one-on-one interviews with heads of household, which, when coupled with a series of three focus groups, provide a qualitative perspective to many of the factors assessed in the survey.

2.2 Demographic & socioeconomic profile of HOPE VI residents

As of October 2013, there are 134 households and 416 individuals classified as the HOPE VI resident population. These numbers are relatively unchanged from baseline (in July 2013, there were 136 households and 411 individuals).

2.2.1 Age and gender

As of September 2013, more than half of all residents continue to be children (18 years old and younger); this group has grown by nearly 5 percent since last year. The proportion of adults has also grown since baseline, while the senior population is declining.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th># of HOPE VI residents, baseline</th>
<th># of HOPE VI residents, current</th>
<th>% change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age 18 and under</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 19-64</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 65+</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Changes to the HOPE VI resident population since last year reflect a greater proportion of females as compared to baseline (as well as the citywide population).

1 Unless otherwise noted, demographic and socioeconomic data for HOPE VI residents was provided by THA through their Tracking-At-A-Glance program. Updated information was provided by THA in September 2013.
3 Source for all current data on HOPE VI households and residents: Taunton Housing Authority, September 2013.
Table 2-2. Gender breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% of HOPE VI residents, baseline</th>
<th>% of HOPE VI residents, current</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>39.2%</td>
<td>37.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>60.8%</td>
<td>62.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.2 Race/ethnicity

The population of HOPE VI residents continues to be far more diverse than that of Taunton, a city where 84.1 percent of residents are White and not Hispanic. Table 2-3 compares the racial and ethnic composition of HOPE VI residents to the population of Taunton:

Table 2-3. Race/ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% of HOPE VI residents</th>
<th>% of Taunton residents&lt;sup&gt;4&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White, not Hispanic</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>84.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American, not Hispanic</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>43.0%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.3 Education

Currently, one third of HOPE VI adult residents do not have a high school diploma. When THA applied for a HOPE VI grant award in November 2010, the proportion was 15.4 percent; however, turnover among residents at Fairfax Gardens shifted the educational attainment of the HOPE VI resident population between this point and the grant award date in May 2011, so that a new baseline must be established (see Table 2-4).

Table 2-4. Educational attainment, all residents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th># of HOPE VI residents</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No HS diploma</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS diploma/GED</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>55.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college/Associate’s</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<sup>4</sup> Source: 2007-2011 American Community Survey (ACS)
Among HOPE VI heads of household, 65 percent had a high school diploma or GED at baseline; that figure is unchanged based on the 2013 needs assessment survey just completed.

2.2.4 Employment & income

Since December 2011, a significant number of HOPE VI residents have found employment. As of September 2013, 80 were employed (46.8 percent of adults ages 19-64), compared to just 41 (25.8 percent) in 2011. The same proportion of employed residents—38.8 percent, or 31 individuals—work full-time as compared to baseline. Among those employed, 81.3 percent have been working at their current job for at least six months.

Average (mean) HOPE VI household income is $10,065, which is just 15.3 percent of Taunton’s average household income of $65,981. This figure represents a slight decrease from baseline ($10,808). Meanwhile, household income in Taunton has increased since baseline, indicating that the gap between HOPE VI household income and that of Taunton residents as a whole has increased.

Employment is the primary source of income for 50 percent of HOPE VI households, a significant increase from baseline when just 29 percent of households were earning most of their income through employment. This is a significant increase that reflects the major increase in employment among HOPE VI residents since 2012 (twice as many adults are employed now). Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), which last year served as the primary source of income for nearly half of HOPE VI households, is now the primary source for just 20.8 percent of residents.

Figure 2-1 provides a breakdown of primary sources of household income among HOPE VI residents:

![Pie chart showing primary sources of household income](image)

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5 Source: 2007-2011 ACS

6 As noted in section 2.2.3, the composition of Fairfax Gardens residents changed between the point at which THA applied for HOPE VI funds (and reported baseline data) and the date funds were awarded, a change that may have affected the accuracy of baseline data.
While the evaluation team’s findings related to income and employment are generally positive, there are a few findings that indicate opportunities for improvement. First, four households reported having no sources of income as of November 2013. Second, while employment has doubled, average household income has actually decreased slightly. Though this may be a reflection of lost public benefits that resulted from employment, it also suggests that employment wages are on the very low end, and far from high enough to sustain households financially.

Because increased employment is a key goal of the HOPE VI project, the evaluation team convened a focus group dedicated to residents’ needs related to entering the workforce. While section 2.8 briefly summarizes the results of that session, a full account of findings can be found in Appendix D.

### 2.3 Community engagement

More HOPE VI households are engaged with service providers in their community as compared to baseline levels: 21 percent are working with at least one supportive service agency (other than THA), versus 15 percent at baseline.

### 2.4 Children

As of September 2013 there were 236 children among HOPE VI residents, comprising 56.7 percent of the HOPE VI population. (In Taunton, 22.7 percent of the population is under 18.) At baseline, there were 226 children.

Table 2-5 breaks down the population of HOPE VI youth by age and compares the present population of youth to baseline data. As expected, some of the change in age is due to the fact that children aged into new categories (or out of childhood), but it is also apparent that HOPE VI households welcomed new children to their families in the past year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>% of HOPE VI youth, baseline</th>
<th>% of HOPE VI youth, current</th>
<th>% change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age 0-5</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
<td>-9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 6-12</td>
<td>39.8%</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 13-18</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>-20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Childcare was the theme of one of the three focus groups conducted with HOPE VI residents (in this case, all participants were parents of young children). A brief summary of findings can be found in section 2.8, while a memo documenting the proceedings of this focus group is located in Appendix D.

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7 Source: THA, November 2013
8 Source: THA, September 2013
2.5 Health

Comprehensive health data was presented in the baseline report; it was collected via a survey related to THA’s With Every Heartbeat is Life program; this survey has not been repeated. However, health data was collected as part of the 2013 resident needs assessment, and those findings are presented in section 2.7. In addition, health and wellness was the topic of one of the focus groups held in May 2013; findings are briefly summarized in section 2.8, while a memo detailing the proceedings is located in Appendix D.

2.6 Transportation

In addition to transportation information collected in the 2013 needs assessment (see section 2.7.3), a few findings related to household transportation were identified through focus groups, interviews with heads of households, and a survey by THA.

THA’s survey, while completed by just 35 residents, reflects the baseline finding that the majority of HOPE VI households (60 percent) have access to a car. Most of the survey respondents reported either having their own car or sharing a car with family and friends (65.7 percent). Nevertheless, they also reported being unable to reach work, healthcare services, school, and shopping due to a lack of transportation. The survey also sought to determine demand for a shuttle to Massasoit Community College (in Brockton) or Bristol Community College (in Fall River); 8 said they would use a shuttle to MCC, while 13 would use a shuttle to BCC.

2.7 Resident needs

In November 2011, THA conducted an initial assessment of HOPE VI adult residents’ needs across the following areas: employment and job training, education, transportation, childcare, health, housing, finances, and ‘other.’ This assessment was updated in November 2013 to determine current levels of need in these areas, which allows the evaluation team to compare current needs against baseline conditions. Findings presented here represent the responses of 144 adults ages 19-64.

2.7.1 Employment & job training

As noted previously in this report, there has been a significant increase in employment among HOPE VI residents since baseline. Full-time employment has increased by 52 percent among needs assessment participants, while part-time employment has remained stable.

At the same time, fewer residents report the following as compared to baseline: wanting a better job, looking for a job at the time of the assessment, and wanting help finding a job. Meanwhile, more residents report: having the ability to work, having childcare problems that impede the ability to work, having transportation problems, and having other barriers to employment.
Regarding job training opportunities and needs, there has been a slight decrease in the percentage of residents who don’t know how to complete a job application, while the proportion of those with a current resume has remained static. Currently, the same proportion—10.3 percent—are enrolled in a job training program to address needs like these, and there has been an 11 percent increase in the proportion of those attending training classes regularly.

There has been a decline in interest in three types of job opportunities: working in construction (almost 20 percent fewer are interested), receiving vocational training (40 percent), and owning one’s own business (another 20 percent decline).

2.7.2 Education

The proportion of needs assessment participants with a high school diploma or GED has remained static at 65 percent since baseline, while slightly fewer (6.5 percent, from 9 percent) are currently enrolled in adult education. The following graph illustrates other levels of educational needs:

![Figure 2-3. Educational needs](image)
2.7.3 Transportation

Transportation needs remain relatively unchanged since baseline. The meaningful changes reflected in this update include an increase in drivers making payments on their cars (+36 percent), an increase with public transit familiarity (+10.3 percent), and an increase in the proportion of respondents who would consider commuting in a van pool or carpool (+8.8 percent).

2.7.4 Childcare

A number of significant changes in the area of childcare needs are evident based on 2013 data; based on information provided by HOPE VI residents through focus groups and interviews, the evaluation team believes most of these changes are related to relocation. These changes are best reflected by the following figure:

Figure 2-4. Childcare needs

- Slightly fewer parents—10.4 percent, down from 11.3 percent—are interested in taking parenting skills classes.

2.7.5 Health

The 2013 needs assessment suggests that some of the mental health needs reported in 2011 have subsided, with a 10 percent reduction in respondents who suffer from anxiety or fear and a 23 percent reduction in the proportion who are interested in mental health counseling. The data also suggests that HOPE VI residents have improved levels of access to care, as evidenced by increases in the proportion who have a primary physician (+4.2 percent) and receive regular checkups (+4.5 percent) as well as the proportion with a dentist (+5.6 percent).
percent) and regular dental checkups (+4.4 percent). At the same time, just 0.6 percent of respondents are in need of immediate medical services (-67 percent).

Needs assessment participants have reported increased incidence of several medical conditions, though this could be a function of increased access to medical services and thus increased levels of diagnosis. Participants report relatively static levels of asthma (25 percent percent) and diabetes (8.7 percent) as compared to baseline, while rates of high blood pressure (18.6 percent, from 17 percent) and arthritis (15.2 percent, from 14.8 percent) have increased only slightly.

Regarding the need for services, there is less interest in mental health counseling (17.4 percent, from 22.6 percent) and smoking cessation counseling (11.7 percent, from 16.1 percent) as compared to what was reported in 2011.

**2.7.6 Housing**

Regarding housing, three-quarters of respondents have a housing choice voucher (from 4.8 percent in November 2011), while another 16 percent are on the waiting list for one. This reflects the fact that Section 8 vouchers were the primary mechanism for subsidizing the housing costs for relocating residents. Other findings from the 2013 needs assessment include the fact that there is less interest in home ownership (60.7 percent are interested, down from 71.8 percent) and far less interest in returning to the new HOPE VI development. Just 21.6 percent of adults are interested in returning to one of the new sites, compared to 39.7 percent two years ago (a decline of 45.7 percent).\(^\text{10}\)

**2.7.7 Financial and legal**

Legal needs among HOPE VI adult residents continue to be limited and show little sign of change since November 2011. Financially, positive changes include the fact that more adults have checking accounts (47.4 percent, from 41.4 percent) and more pay their bills on time (85.4 percent, from 80.6 percent). On the other hand, more residents now have loan payments (13 percent, from 10.8 percent) and more have had a car repossessed (6.2 percent, from 4.9 percent). Nevertheless, interest in credit counseling has declined by 31.3 percent, with just 8.7 percent of adults indicating interest in this service.

**2.7.8 Other needs**

Assessment participants were also asked about civic engagement, interest in counseling, and other services they receive. Based on questions about voting, HOPE VI residents appear to be more engaged: 53 percent are registered to vote, up from just 40.5 percent, and 54.9 percent are interested in exercising this right (from 45.5 percent). While few residents reported belonging to social or community organizations at baseline (3.6 percent), even fewer do now (3 percent). There was also a 25 percent decline in the proportion of adults working with other supportive services agencies. No participants are interested in marriage counseling, while just 9 percent are interested in family counseling.

\(^{10}\) According to THA staff, this change is due to the fact that many are reluctant to give up their Section 8 housing choice voucher.
2.8 Relocation

As noted in the baseline report, longitudinal research conducted by HUD has demonstrated that when voucher-holding households relocate from high-poverty neighborhoods to communities where the concentration of poverty is lower, they experience improvements to mental and physical health, housing quality, social bonds, and feelings of safety.11

At baseline, the evaluation team compiled data on the poverty rates of HOPE VI households upon initial relocation (which was completed by July 2012). According to the 2010 US Census, 13.8 percent of residents in the Fairfax Gardens neighborhood were below the poverty level. The evaluation team then found that 43.6 percent of households had moved to neighborhoods with comparatively lower concentrations of poverty. The majority—56.4 percent—had moved to neighborhoods where more than 13.8 percent of residents were below poverty. This translated to an average neighborhood poverty rate of 18.8 percent across HOPE VI households, with rates ranging from just 2 percent to 62.3 percent.

One year later, an analysis of current addresses of HOPE VI households (provided by the Taunton Housing Authority in September 2013) reveals that comparatively more households live in neighborhoods where the poverty rate exceeds that of the Fairfax Gardens neighborhood (now 14.4 percent, based on the 2007-11 American Community Survey). Nearly three quarters—73.4 percent—of HOPE VI households currently live in neighborhoods where the concentration of poverty exceeds 14.4 percent. Just one quarter—25.2 percent—live in neighborhoods of lower poverty levels. Two households remain in the same census tract as the site of Fairfax Gardens.

At the same time, the range of concentrations of poverty has narrowed, with the highest neighborhood poverty rate of 53.8 percent (compared to 62.3 percent, the highest rate at baseline). Another positive finding is that 62 percent of HOPE VI households are currently located in neighborhoods where the poverty rate is below 20 percent, an increase from baseline when a majority of residents—53 percent—instead lived in neighborhoods where poverty exceeded 20 percent. Indeed, the concentration of poverty in an average HOPE VI household’s neighborhood is 18.2 percent, a slight decline from baseline (18.8 percent).

2.9 Focus group findings

Health and wellness, employment, and child development are all areas in which this project seeks to realize positive outcomes for HOPE VI residents and their families. Accordingly, the evaluation team convened three issue-oriented focus groups with select residents to gauge the degree to which residents are progressing toward project goals and provide context to the data analyzed in this report.

The objective of each focus group was to inform the delivery of services in each of these three areas by learning about residents’ needs, level of information, successes, barriers, and ideas for

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improvement. Key findings from each focus group are summarized here, while three memos detailing each session’s proceedings are located in Appendix D.

The health and wellness focus group covered three topics: healthy eating and active living (along with the With Every Heartbeat is Life program, which emphasizes these issues), smoking cessation, and mental health counseling. And because one of the key themes across each topic was needs and barriers related to HOPE VI resident engagement, the group devoted some time to brainstorming how to overcome factors—like language and cultural barriers, stigmas, and cost concerns—that might prevent fellow residents from accessing services in these areas. Indeed, the participants emphasized that services in these areas are generally excellent, but too few HOPE VI residents are taking advantage of them.

The focus group on childcare addressed general needs, early childhood education, and the transition to the K-12 setting. Recurring themes included transportation needs, challenges accessing vouchers and daycare slots, and the need for childcare during nontraditional hours to accommodate nontraditional work schedules. The evaluation team also identified a need to inform parents of the role early educational enrichment programs can play in preparing children for kindergarten and the distinction between daycare and such programs.

The focus group on jobs yielded very low turnout compared to the other two sessions, and the few participants who attended were generally disengaged in the conversation. Nevertheless, transportation was an issue to which the conversation repeatedly turned, because participants noted that without a car, it is difficult to find an accessible job or prepare for one through job training or higher education.

2.10 Interview findings

Between March and June 2013, the evaluation team interviewed 25 randomly selected heads of household using the interview protocol developed by HUD to learn more about residents’ experiences with relocation, current housing and neighborhood conditions, household composition, social networks, employment, hardship, health, education, and plans for the future. Though the interviews covered a wide range of topics and engaged a diverse cohort of residents (including six Spanish-speaking heads of household), a few themes emerged. First, the work of the THA case managers was consistently praised, and their role in the relocation process was responsible for many residents’ positive experiences. Second, most interviewees are more satisfied with their current housing and neighborhoods as compared to conditions at Fairfax Gardens, and for the most part, relocation had little impact on employment, health, and quality of life for interviewees and their families. Third, this increased level of satisfaction, coupled with a general reluctance to lose one’s Section 8 voucher and a fear that conditions at both new developments will revert to previous levels of dysfunction, translates to a general disinclination toward returning to the HOPE VI developments. Finally, the barriers faced by this selection of HOPE VI residents are numerous and substantial; as a result, very few report making long-term plans and setting long-term goals.

A detailed account of interview findings is located in Appendix E. Interviews will be repeated with the same individuals (to the extent possible) in 2014 and 2015.
3.0 FAIRFAX GARDENS NEIGHBORHOOD – DATA & ANALYSIS

3.1 Overview

Among the goals of HOPE VI is improving conditions in the neighborhood surrounding the distressed public housing development. For the evaluation team’s baseline report, start-of-project conditions were measured using data related to resident demographics and socioeconomic profiles, business development, housing, crime, and access to services and amenities. Most of this data is updated in the following section to show changes from baseline conditions.

Additionally, a door-to-door survey was conducted to gauge perceptions of neighborhood residents. This survey will be repeated at the conclusion of the HOPE VI project.

3.2 Limitations

Much of the neighborhood- and city-level data gathered and reported on in this report is sourced from the most current information provided by the US Census Bureau, which generally spans the years 2007-11. While this is more up-to-date than the data provided in the 2012 baseline report—that covered the years 2006-10, as well as the 2010 US Census—this data will not reflect changes resulting from the HOPE VI project, as site demolition did not begin until 2012. Instead, this data can be seen as providing an updated baseline against which to measure impacts to the neighborhood and city upon this project’s completion. This disclaimer also applies to housing market data, as the most recent data available only covers 2012.

3.3 Defining the neighborhood

The Urban Initiative continues to define the HOPE VI neighborhood as the community within one mile of the former site of Fairfax Gardens (DeWert Avenue). Because this area includes five census tracts, (see map in Appendix A), we present neighborhood data in two ways: first, by including the entire populations of each tract—6133 (which includes Shores Street, the northern border of the Fairfax Gardens parcel), 6134 (the tract in which Fairfax Gardens is located), 6139.01, 6140 (the neighborhood due east of Parcel 6A), and 6138 (which includes Parcel 6A)—and also by using geographic information systems (GIS) to select only the households within the one-mile radius of Fairfax Gardens. Whenever possible, data representing both approaches is presented in this section, while disaggregated census tract data can be found in the Appendix. This approach ensures that even if census tract boundaries change in the future, compiling data within the one-mile radius maintains consistency and allows information to be directly comparable.

3.3 Demographic & socioeconomic profile of neighborhood residents

Within one mile of the Fairfax Gardens site live an estimated 4,927 individuals, which represents 8.8 percent of the city of Taunton’s population. The baseline population (since updated from the 2012 report), based on figures from the 2006-10 American Community Survey, was 4,862, reflecting no meaningful change. When taken together, these figures help establish a population against which change can be more effectively measured at the completion of the HOPE VI project.

12 2007-11 ACS, via Missouri Census Data Center
### 3.3.1 Age & gender

The median age of residents in the five census tracts located within a mile of Fairfax Gardens ranges from 33-44.1 years old, compared to a median age of 38.4 years citywide. Since baseline, the neighborhood’s population has become collectively older, as demonstrated by the table below:

**Table 3-1. Age breakdown, Fairfax Gardens neighborhood**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>% of neighborhood, baseline</th>
<th>% of neighborhood, current</th>
<th>% change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age 0-17</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>-20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 18-64</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>65.7%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 65+</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The neighborhood surrounding Fairfax Gardens remains almost identical to Taunton when it comes to gender distribution, while the proportion of females among the HOPE VI population has increased by 2.5 percent.

**Table 3-2. Gender breakdown, Fairfax Gardens neighborhood**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>% of neighborhood</th>
<th>% of Taunton residents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>48.7%</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>51.3%</td>
<td>51.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Appendix B-1 for tabular and graphical representations of this data.

### 3.3.2 Race/ethnicity & immigration

The neighborhood surrounding Fairfax Gardens appears to be growing more diverse: currently, 80.8 percent of residents within a mile of Dewert Avenue identify as White (not Hispanic), compared to 84 percent at baseline. Another 8 percent are Hispanic (up from 3 percent at baseline), while 6.5 percent are Black (from 9 percent at baseline). See Appendix B-2 for the distribution of race and ethnicity in the census tracts around Fairfax Gardens.

An estimated 12 percent of the residents of tracts 6133, 6134, 6138, 6139.01 and 6140 were born outside of the United States, which is unchanged since baseline. (More data on immigration is available in Appendix B-3). Slightly more neighborhood residents speak a language other than English at home (21.3 percent, compared to 20 percent at baseline), and

---

13 2010 US Census
12 Revised from 2012 baseline report to reflect 2010 US Census data
11 Source: 2007-11 ACS
14 Source: 2010 US Census
15 Sources: 2007-11 ACS (current); 2006-10 ACS (baseline)
16 Source: 2006-10 American Community Survey
slightly more speak English “less than very well” (9.3 percent, up from 8.5 percent). More of this data can be found in Appendix B-3.

### 3.3.3 Education

Since baseline, the population of adults in the Fairfax Gardens neighborhood has shifted in a way that reflects now-lower levels of educational attainment: more than one-quarter of adults in the area are without a high school diploma, and just 15 percent hold a Bachelor’s degree (20.7 percent did at last count, which is based on the 2006-10 American Community Survey). Citywide, educational attainment remained relatively unchanged.

| Table 3-4. Educational attainment, Fairfax Gardens neighborhood (baseline data in parentheses) |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
|                                | % of neighborhood<sup>19</sup> | % of Taunton residents<sup>20</sup> |
| No HS diploma                  | 26.6%                          | 18.3%                          |
| HS diploma/GED                 | 32.2%                          | 34.3%                          |
| Some college/Associate’s       | 26%                            | 27.9%                          |
| Bachelor’s degree+             | 15.3%                          | 19.6%                          |

For more data and figures on educational attainment, see Appendix B-4.

### 3.3.4 Employment & income

While household income citywide has remained unchanged since baseline, levels have fluctuated widely across the census tracts encompassing and surrounding Fairfax Gardens. (Note: the site of Fairfax Gardens is tract 6134, while Parcel 6A is located in tract 6138.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3-5. Median household income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOPE VI residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Taunton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tract 6133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tract 6134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tract 6138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tract 6139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tract 6140</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding levels of unemployment, the caveat still applies: census-reported, neighborhood-level unemployment rates can only be considered an indicator of something that varies over

<sup>19</sup> Source: (2006-10 ACS), 2007-11 ACS (one-mile radius via Community Commons)

<sup>18</sup> Source: (American Community Survey), 2007-11 American Community Survey (one-mile radius)

<sup>21</sup> Source: 2007-11 American Community Survey

<sup>22</sup> This amount reflects mean (average) household income, as median amount was not available.
time and thus includes a large margin of error. Across the five census tracts being measured, the average unemployment rate for the Fairfax Gardens neighborhood across 2007-11 was 10 percent, up from 7 percent at baseline. The lowest rate of unemployment is found in tract 6140 (7.9 percent). (More data is available in Appendix B-5.)

Where poverty is concerned, the average rate thereof (across all relevant census tracts) has actually decreased from 14.3 percent to 13.5 percent. The lowest rate continues to be found in tract 6133 (3.9 percent, a slight decline since baseline), while the highest rate is in tract 6138 (20.6 percent, also down slightly from baseline). See Appendix B-6 for figures depicting neighborhood poverty.

3.5 Economic development

The evaluation team measured current information against baseline data across three areas indicating changes to economic development: current and future projects under development, a profile of the commercial sector, and business vacancy rates across the relevant census tracts. (Note: land use maps did not reflect changes and were thus excluded from this analysis.)

3.5.1 Current & future projects

Kevin Shea, Director of the City of Taunton’s Office of Economic and Community Development, did not respond to multiple requests for information on current and future projects in the neighborhood and in the City of Taunton. If an update becomes available at a later date, the evaluation team will update this document to reflect that information.

3.5.2 Profile of commercial sector

As of October 2013, there were an estimated 1,235 businesses operating within one mile of Parcel 6A. 21

This represents a decline of 12.8 percent since July 2012. Sectors that experienced significant decline include arts, entertainment, and recreation; construction; manufacturing; professional, scientific, and technical services; retail trade; and transportation and warehousing.

Table 3-6. Commercial sector by classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAICS CLASSIFICATION (#)</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Current</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NUMBER</td>
<td>PERCENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation and Food Services (72)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (56)</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing &amp; Hunting (11)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation (71)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction (23)</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Services (61)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5.3 Employment by sector

The Retail Trade sector is currently the largest employer for the one-mile radius of Parcel 6A (19.5 percent), followed by the Health Care and Social Assistance field (15.7 percent), the Accommodation and Food Services industry (11.6 percent), and the Manufacturing sector (10.9 percent).²⁴

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAICS CLASSIFICATION</th>
<th>NUMBER EMPLOYED</th>
<th>PERCENT OF ALL EMPLOYED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation and Food Services</td>
<td>612</td>
<td>11.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>3.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>1.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>7.89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Services</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>3.93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance and Insurance, Real Estate and Rental and Leasing</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>3.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care and Social Assistance</td>
<td>831</td>
<td>15.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>1.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of Companies and Enterprises</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>576</td>
<td>10.89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Services (except Public Administration)</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>5.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>3.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>3.71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

²⁴ Source: ACS 2007-11, via PolicyMap
3.6 **Housing market**

Because much of the currently available housing market data reflects the years 2007-2011, the effects of the recent turmoil in the nation’s housing market are more acutely reflected in this year’s data as compared to baseline.

### 3.6.1 Profile of housing stock

Census estimates reflect approximately 100 fewer housing units now than reported at baseline within one mile of Fairfax Gardens: 1,799, compared to 1,901.\(^{25}\) This continues to represent close to 8 percent of Taunton’s total number of housing units.

See Table 3-6 for a breakdown of total number of housing units for each of the five census tracts being tracked for evaluation purposes.

**Table 3-7. Number of housing units**\(^ {26}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census tract</th>
<th>Baseline # housing units</th>
<th>Current # housing units</th>
<th>% change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6133</td>
<td>2,738</td>
<td>2,773</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6134</td>
<td>1,436</td>
<td>1,433</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6138</td>
<td>2,464</td>
<td>2,341</td>
<td>-5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6139</td>
<td>1,363</td>
<td>1,364</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6140</td>
<td>1,956</td>
<td>1,961</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>9,957</strong></td>
<td><strong>9,872</strong></td>
<td><strong>-1%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.6.2 Housing occupancy

Housing vacancy has increased in the area within a mile of Fairfax Gardens since baseline: currently, 9.8 percent of units are vacant, up from 8 percent. The rate has also increased across the City of Taunton, from 6.5 percent to 8.4 percent. Tract 6138 has the highest vacancy rate among tracts surrounding Fairfax Gardens with 18.5 percent of units vacant; while particularly high, this represents a decrease since baseline (22 percent). The lowest vacancy rate is in tract 6133, where just 5.3 percent of units are vacant (see Appendix C-4 for more of this data). Regarding occupancy type, more homes in the neighborhood are owner-occupied now (62.5 percent) than at baseline (61 percent).

---

\(^{25}\) Source: 2007-11 American Community Survey (via Community Commons); baseline source: 2005-09 ACS

\(^{24}\) Source: 2010 Census
3.6.3 Home values

The median home values in the five census tracts around Fairfax Gardens now range from $262,000 to $299,000 (at baseline, values ranged from $235,100 to $313,000). According to the most recent census data,27 46 percent of home values across the five tracts fall between $200,000-299,000, while 28.2 percent fall between $300,000-399,000 (at baseline, the proportions were 38 percent and 33 percent, respectively). The median home value in Taunton has declined since baseline, falling to $275,100 from $285,200.

See Appendix C-2 for more data and figures on home values in the Fairfax Gardens neighborhood.

3.6.4 Home sales

Tract 6133 saw the most home sale activity in 2012 with 5.6 percent (154 homes) of the tract’s total housing stock being sold. The remainder of the tracts hovered around the citywide sales percentage of 3.7 (down from 3.9 percent at baseline), with the exception of 6140 and 6138, which sold 1.7 and 1.9 percent of their total housing stock, respectively.28 See Figure 3-5 for home sales trends by Census tract between 2006-2010. Tables presenting raw data are available in Appendix C-5.

Figure 3-5. Number of annual home sales, 2006-12

Because currently available home sales prices reflect census data from 2007-11, they more realistically reflect the effects of the housing market crash that began in 2008. Accordingly, the data reflects home sale prices continuing to decline from baseline, except in tract 6140, which rebounded from a price of $123,175 to a median sales price of $168,900. The highest

27 Source: 2007-11 American Community Survey
28 Source: Boxwood Means, Inc. via PolicyMap
29 Source: Boxwood Means, Inc. via PolicyMap
median sales price continues to be found in tract 6133, though the median price of $195,000 is still far below the price reported at baseline ($255,754). Meanwhile, the lowest price is still found in tract 6138 ($132,000). Figure 3-6 demonstrates these trends; see Appendix C-5 for more data on median sale prices.

Figure 3-6. Median home sale prices, 2006-12

![Graph showing median home sale prices, 2006-2012](image)

3.6.5 Home lending

Home lending in the neighborhood around Fairfax Gardens represents 44.5 percent of all lending in Taunton, an increase of one percentage point since baseline. Tract 6133 continues to generate the most lending, though 2011 data (the most recent available) reflects a steep decline from 2010 (182 mortgage originations, down from 222).

Figure 3-7 demonstrates five-year trends in the number of loans originated in each of the relevant tracts, and the full data set can be found in Appendix C-6.

---

28 Source: Boxwood Means, Inc. via PolicyMap
29 Source: Boxwood Means, Inc. via PolicyMap
While the majority of loans originated in both Taunton and the census tracts of interest continued to be for the purpose of refinancing, the most recently available data reflects an decrease in the proportion of lending for home purchases (see Appendix C-6).

### 3.6.6 Rental Market

In FY2013, the fair market rent for a 3-bedroom unit in the Taunton-Mansfield-Norton HUD Metro Area is $1,412. According to the 2007-11 American Community Survey, 26.7 percent of gross rents paid range from $750-999 while another 26.8 percent are between $1,000-1,499. The average median gross rent across all five tracts is $850.

Additional rental market data can be found in Appendix C-7.

### 3.7 Crime

City of Taunton Police Chief Edward Walsh did not respond to multiple requests for crime data in the Fairfax Gardens neighborhood that would allow for comparisons against baseline crime rates. Should that information become available at a later date, the evaluation team will update this report accordingly.

### 3.8 Community services and amenities

In general, the location of Fairfax Gardens makes for difficult access to services and amenities, particularly for residents of the original development and surrounding neighborhood who are without access to a car. Access issues will be significantly mitigated for about 45 percent of HOPE VI households that will occupy the new development at Parcel 6A upon its completion, due to this site’s proximity to the city’s downtown, shopping plazas, and a bus terminal.

---

30 Source: Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA), via PolicyMap
33 Source: HUD FY2013 Fair Market Rent Documentation System
For the purposes of this baseline analysis, the services and amenities being inventoried include transportation, public services provided by municipal government, amenities, and civic/social organizations.

### 3.8.1 Transportation

The evaluation team used the Walk Score metric to track changes in walkability around the Fairfax Gardens site and Parcel 6A. Since baseline, the area surrounding DeWert Avenue has become more walkable, with a Walk Score increase of 10 points (35, from 25 at baseline). While this designation is still deemed “car dependent,” this suggests that more amenities are now located within walking distance of this area, a sign that bodes well for those who will be returning to this development.

Meanwhile, the score corresponding to the neighborhood of Parcel 6A (using an address of 79 Mason Street, which is adjacent to the site of the new development) has actually declined to 74 (from 86). Nevertheless, this still means the neighborhood is considered “very walkable.”

Regarding public transportation, current census data suggests that fewer residents of the census tract encompassing Fairfax Gardens (6134) are using public transportation to commute to work (just 0.8 percent, compared to 1.5 percent at baseline) while more are driving alone (89.5 percent). See Table 3-7 for a breakdown of how residents of tract 6134 commute to work:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drove Alone</td>
<td>89.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpoled</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Transportation</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Means</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worked at home</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.8.2 Public services & amenities

Public services as measured by proximity include police stations, fire stations, hospitals, Post Offices, schools, and libraries. Distances to these services have not changed since baseline.

Access to amenities is also relatively unchanged, except that the Fairfax Gardens site now has a more proximal grocery store (Martinez Market, just 0.5 miles from the site).

---

34 Source: 2006-2010 American Community Survey
35 Note: unless otherwise noted, all distances are measured via walkscore.org.
4.0 CONCLUSION

While the effects of this HOPE VI project on the neighborhood have yet to manifest themselves in the data available to the evaluation team, it is clear that HOPE VI residents have already begun realizing the benefits of improved housing and neighborhoods, increased employment, and increased access to services and opportunities. According to qualitative research conducted over the past year, many of those benefits are in part attributable to strong relationships between HOPE VI residents and THA case managers, who have worked one-on-one to help residents overcome obstacles, learn about and take advantage of resources and supports, and identify opportunities that promote self-sufficiency.

At the same time, the evaluation team’s qualitative findings (detailed in Appendices D and E, which report on focus group and interview results, respectively) suggest that among HOPE VI residents and households, there is one contingent that is taking advantage of the program and its resources, and another that is disconnected and disengaged. Because it is likely that those in the latter group are just as much in need of the services and opportunities provided by HOPE VI, failure to engage these individuals and families in services and programs threatens THA’s ability to achieve some of the goals of HOPE VI. Fortunately, many residents themselves offered suggestions for reaching the disengaged; their ideas are included in the appended summaries of focus groups. Another challenge that continues to impede access to jobs and childcare is transportation. While THA has met this challenge with a strong response, bus service in greater Taunton remains limited while development in the city and surrounding towns is sprawling in a way that makes it nearly impossible to realize personal and economic self-sufficiency without access to a car.
APPENDIX A: Map – Census tracts and Fairfax Gardens one-mile radius
APPENDIX B: Neighborhood resident data and figures

B-1 Age distribution of neighborhood residents
B-2 Race and ethnicity of neighborhood residents
B-3 Immigration and language
B-4 Educational attainment
B-5 Income and employment
B-6 Poverty rate
### B-1 Age as percentage of population, by census tract

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Tract 6133</th>
<th>Tract 6134</th>
<th>Tract 6138</th>
<th>Tract 6139.01</th>
<th>Tract 6140</th>
<th>All Tracts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14 and under</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-24</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 and up</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2007-11 ACS

### B-2.1. Race distribution of neighborhood residents, by census tract

![Race distribution chart](chart.png)

Source: 2007-11 ACS
B-2.2. Race distribution of residents, aggregate of all Census tracts

![Race distribution pie chart]

Source: 2007-11 ACS

B-3.1. Foreign-born population of neighborhood, all tracts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>6133</th>
<th>6134</th>
<th>6138</th>
<th>6139.01</th>
<th>6140</th>
<th>All Tracts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreign-born Population</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>799</td>
<td>2769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>7429</td>
<td>3862</td>
<td>4279</td>
<td>2502</td>
<td>4246</td>
<td>22318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Pop Foreign-born</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B-3.2. Language spoken at home, all tracts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language spoken at home</th>
<th>6133</th>
<th>6134</th>
<th>6138</th>
<th>6139.01</th>
<th>6140</th>
<th>All Tracts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total #</td>
<td>6997</td>
<td>3592</td>
<td>4117</td>
<td>2337</td>
<td>4032</td>
<td>21069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English only</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
<td>78.4%</td>
<td>73.7%</td>
<td>78.8%</td>
<td>69.6%</td>
<td>78.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language other than English</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak English less than &quot;very well&quot;</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B-4. Educational attainment, by Census tract

Source: 2007-11 ACS
B-5.1. Household income, aggregate of all tracts

Source: 2007-11 ACS

B-5.2. Unemployment rate, all tracts

Source: 2007-11 ACS
B-6.1. Poverty rate, all individuals, by Census tract

Source: 2007-11 ACS

B-6.2. Poverty rate, Census tract aggregate vs. City of Taunton

Source: 2007-11 ACS
APPENDIX C – Neighborhood crime & housing

C-1  Crime
C-2  Home values
C-3  Housing profile
C-4  Housing occupancy
C-5  Home sales
C-6  Home lending
C-7  Rental market

C-1. Crime

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Murder</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggravated Assault</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto Theft</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Part 1 Crimes</strong></td>
<td><strong>41.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>26.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>22.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>26.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>45.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>27.7</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Destruction/Vandalism</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disorderly Conduct</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug/Narcotic Violations</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple Assault</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weapon Law Violation</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.6</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Select Part 2 Crimes</strong></td>
<td><strong>49.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>13.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>55.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>15.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>30.23</strong></td>
<td><strong>14.44</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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</table>
### C-2.1. Median home values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tract</th>
<th>Baseline values</th>
<th>Current values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6133</td>
<td>$309,400</td>
<td>$291,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6134</td>
<td>$313,000</td>
<td>$299,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6138</td>
<td>$283,000</td>
<td>$268,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6139.01</td>
<td>$235,100</td>
<td>$262,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6140</td>
<td>$275,500</td>
<td>$268,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Taunton</td>
<td>$285,200</td>
<td>$275,100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2006-10/2007-11 ACS

### C-2.2. Assessed home values, aggregate of all tracts

All values in thousands of dollars:
- 10 to 99
- 100 to 199
- 200 to 299
- 300 to 399
- 400 to 499
- 500 to 749
- 750 or more

- 42.6%
- 28.2%
- 10.6%
- 5.7%
- 9.0%
- 3.0%
- 0.9%
C-3. Year of Construction

C-4.1. Housing vacancy

C-4.2 Owner-occupancy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2007-11 ACS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owner-Occupied</td>
<td>61.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter-Occupied</td>
<td>38.28%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### C-5.1. Total number of home sales, by census tract (2006-12)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tract</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6133</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>123</td>
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<td>6134</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6138</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6139</td>
<td>394</td>
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<td>117</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>44</td>
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<td>6140</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>34</td>
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</table>

### C-5.2. Median sale price, by census tract (2006-12)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tract</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6133</td>
<td>$296,000</td>
<td>$255,000</td>
<td>$270,000</td>
<td>$223,768</td>
<td>$234,000</td>
<td>$215,000</td>
<td>$195,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6134</td>
<td>$265,000</td>
<td>$290,000</td>
<td>$256,000</td>
<td>$194,937</td>
<td>$220,000</td>
<td>$185,000</td>
<td>$180,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6138</td>
<td>$270,000</td>
<td>$257,500</td>
<td>$214,000</td>
<td>$170,000</td>
<td>$162,500</td>
<td>$160,250</td>
<td>$132,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6139</td>
<td>$235,000</td>
<td>$245,000</td>
<td>$209,000</td>
<td>$162,087</td>
<td>$165,000</td>
<td>$175,000</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6140</td>
<td>$257,500</td>
<td>$242,000</td>
<td>$191,707</td>
<td>$180,398</td>
<td>$123,175</td>
<td>$168,900</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bristol County</td>
<td>$282,667</td>
<td>$270,000</td>
<td>$233,454</td>
<td>$219,000</td>
<td>$217,000</td>
<td>$209,000</td>
<td>$199,000</td>
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### C-6.1. Number of loans originated, by census tract (2006-11)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tract</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
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<tr>
<td>6133</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>182</td>
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<td>6134</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>111</td>
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<tr>
<td>6138</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>6139</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6140</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taunton</td>
<td>2,325</td>
<td>1,483</td>
<td>1,066</td>
<td>1,481</td>
<td>1,291</td>
<td>1,021</td>
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</table>

### C-6.2. Loans by type, 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tract</th>
<th>Purchase</th>
<th>Refinance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6133</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
<td>75.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6134</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
<td>61.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6138</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6139</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
<td>55.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6140</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
<td>55.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taunton</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
<td>68.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### C-6.2. Loans by type, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tract</th>
<th>Purchase</th>
<th>Refinance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6133</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
<td>75.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6134</td>
<td>39.7%</td>
<td>60.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6138</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6139</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
<td>58.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6140</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
<td>63.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taunton</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>69.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
C-7.1. Gross rent distribution, aggregate of all tracts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Size</th>
<th>FY12 FMR</th>
<th>FY13 FMR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Studio</td>
<td>$659</td>
<td>$826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Bedroom</td>
<td>$831</td>
<td>$872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Bedrooms</td>
<td>$1,015</td>
<td>$1,134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Bedrooms</td>
<td>$1,245</td>
<td>$1,412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Bedrooms</td>
<td>$1,344</td>
<td>$1,515</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C-7.2. Fair market rents, City of Taunton
APPENDIX D: Focus group summaries

D-1 Health and wellness focus group findings
D-2 Early childhood focus group findings
D-3 Workforce focus group findings
D-1. Health and wellness focus group findings

To: Taunton Housing Authority
From: Colleen Dawicki
Date: 5/8/2013
Re: Focus group #1: Health & wellness

On Wednesday, May 8, 2013, the UMass Dartmouth Urban Initiative conducted its first focus group aimed at learning about health and wellness needs and services. Four HOPE VI residents participated. The overarching goal of this focus group was to inform the delivery of health and wellness services by learning about HOPE VI residents’ needs, level of information, successes, barriers, and ideas for improvement in each of three areas: 1) healthy eating and active living (WEHL); 2) smoking cessation; and 3) mental health counseling. Finally, we discussed general strategies for engaging residents in CSS programs.

1. Healthy eating & active living / WEHL

Needs of HOPE VI residents:

- Access to healthy food that is affordable; this is particularly challenging at the end of the month
- Ability to grow own food (this need will be met at new development)
- Transportation to Market Basket, where prices are low and fruit/vegetable selection is varied (and cross-cultural)

Level of information about WEHL

- THA does good job of informing residents about WEHL offerings in mailings
- Case managers do good job of sharing info about this program
- If people aren’t participating, it’s not due to lack of information

What’s working

- Walking club is great
- Educational aspects
- Connection to YMCA has been a great benefit, especially for households with kids

Ideas for improvement

- WEHL meeting time isn’t accessible for everyone; maybe offer an afternoon program
- Offer vouchers for purchasing fruit/veg from local farms
- Do any local farmer’s markets accept EBT?
2. Smoking cessation

Needs of HOPE VI residents:
- Many residents are smokers who need to quit for health purposes and/or to help them comply with THA’s no smoking policy
- Sufficient services/resources are available for people who want to quit
- Education around the impact of smoking and what it’s like to quit (example: if people know that attempting to quit will cause symptoms like weight gain or irritability, they might be better prepared to persist)
- Education around ways to quit (e.g. counseling, nicotine patch), because people don’t always know that there are ways to quit besides the ‘cold turkey’ approach, and people may not trust medication or the patch as a safe, proven method

Level of information about smoking cessation
- There is ample awareness around how to access services/resources to help quit smoking, both through monthly newsletter and via case managers
- See above re. need for education about process

Ideas for improvement
- More education (in addition to the programming offered through WEHL)
- Peer support: those who have quit can help others

3. Mental health counseling

Needs of HOPE VI residents
- Living at Fairfax Gardens was traumatic; many have mental health issues as a result (e.g. panic attacks, sleeping problems, general stress)
- People were afraid to talk about issues at Fairfax Gardens because of concerns around retribution
- Seeking help and participating in mental health counseling is stigmatized by some; others don’t feel like it will help

Level of information about mental health counseling
- Participants know about their ability to seek counseling via their case managers
- While they know services are available, less is known about whether insurance will cover, or what costs might be incurred
- Room for more info in this area

What’s working
- One participant receiving counseling and psychiatric services; very satisfied
- Has learned valuable techniques for dealing with stress, identifying the connection between eating habits and mental health, and regulating sleep
- Her take: everyone should be doing this, because it’s been so impactful
Ideas for improvement

• Offer a WEHL-like program to educate residents about mental health issues, resources, and strategies for coping
• Offer mental health counseling options or programs for children too
• Could there be a community health worker from among HOPE VI residents who could educate peers about resources available to support mental health?
• Group discussion sessions could be helpful in giving residents a place to share challenges, strategies for coping
• For some, talking with peers is easier and more accessible than talking with a stranger

4. How to engage more residents

• One of the reasons residents aren’t taking advantage of services/resources might be the language barrier, which is a big barrier even for non-native English speakers
• Anxiety around communicating with strangers might prevent people from taking initiative to seek resources on their own, especially because talking on the phone is a major source of anxiety; maybe they need a case manager to help them take that first step (for example, set up an appointment or accompany them to a first visit)
• Because phone conversations are challenging, face-to-face contacts and emails might be a better means of outreach (many HOPE VI residents can get email on phone, and are probably less likely to read their regular mail)
• Preferred method of outreach: face-to-face first if possible, email second, letter third
• May be able to enlist HOPE VI residents in reaching out to their peers, especially doing face-to-face outreach
D-2. Early childhood focus group findings

To: Taunton Housing Authority
From: Colleen Dawicki
Date: 5/15/2013
Re: Focus group #2: Early childhood issues

On Wednesday, May 15, 2013, the UMass Dartmouth Urban Initiative conducted its second of three focus groups. The purpose of this group meeting was aimed at learning about child care and early childhood education needs and services. Three HOPE VI residents participated. The overarching goal of this focus group was to discover the degree to which THA and its partners can more effectively provide residents with services and support for provision of quality educational opportunities to young children (<5 yr) by learning about HOPE VI residents’ needs, level of information, successes, barriers, and ideas for improvement in each of three areas: 1) child care (general); 2) early childhood education – preschool programs that provide instruction; and 3) thinking ahead to the children’s transition into school-age educational experiences.

1. Child care (general)

Needs of HOPE VI residents:
- Transportation appears to be by far the greatest challenge faced by HOPE VI residents who require child care services and do not have access to a car.
- GATRA routes and times do not fit well with work and child care schedules.
- Residents who want to work face a child care Catch-22: you need a job >20 hr/wk in order to get a voucher for day care, but you can’t get a job unless you have already arranged for day care.
- Only Triumph, Inc. (Head Start) offers transport in Taunton, but wait lists are long for placement in class, and even longer for transport (>1 yr).
- Day care options are reported to be unavailable on weekends; this would impact opportunities for jobs at the mall and similar locations.
- Often no family members are available to babysit short term; a single parent with a child may be isolated, with no other family as local residents. At Fairfax Gardens, there were more opportunities to arrange last-minute babysitting.

Ideas for improvement
- Determine availability of HOPE VI van to be used for day care transportation.
- Consider fee-based van service to encourage appropriate usage and to offset costs.
- Investigate whether P.A.C.E. might be able to assist.
2. Early childhood education – preschool programs that provide instruction

Needs of HOPE VI residents:
- More information is needed about the difference between child care and programs that offer more structured early childhood education, and the degree to which the latter is critical for children’s long-term academic success.
- More information is needed about early childhood enrichment programs beyond Head Start.

Ideas for improvement
- Seek to increase the options for pre-kindergarten children. Parents believe that options increase dramatically for children once they reach school age.

3. Thinking ahead – when children reach school-age

Needs of HOPE VI residents
- Children may now be more isolated than they were at Fairfax Gardens, where there were always opportunities to socialize and find someone to play with.
- There is a perception that there are plenty of additional educational and socializing options for school age kids (as an example, Boys & Girls Club becomes an option at age 6)

Ideas for improvement
- Children’s safety is a foundational concern that must be addressed if families with children are to return to THA housing.
D-3. Workforce focus group findings

To: Taunton Housing Authority
From: Colleen Dawicki
Date: 5/24/2013
Re: Focus group #3: Workforce development

On the evening of Tuesday, May 21, 2013, the UMass Dartmouth Urban Initiative conducted its third and final focus group. This focus group aimed at learning about workforce development. Four HOPE VI residents attended; one did not participate in the discussion. The overarching goal of this focus group was to inform the delivery of job training and placement programs by learning about HOPE VI residents’ needs, level of information, successes, barriers, and ideas for improvement in each of the following areas: 1) preparing to enter the workforce; 2) job training; 3) career education; and 4) job placement.

One of our key findings is that it appears that workforce development is not an engaging topic for many HOPE VI residents: not only was there a low turnout that suggests limited interest in discussing this matter, but also the participants themselves displayed little interest in or awareness of these issues. Since our very small sample size does not allow us to make broad conclusions, we wonder if the same would hold true with a larger group of participants. But it is of interest to note that the greatest attendance and most engaging discussions came out of the focus group on health and wellness (centered on WEHL, smoking cessation, and mental health counseling). Fairly strong participant interest was also evoked by the focus group on childcare and early childhood needs and services.

1. Preparing to enter the workforce

Needs of HOPE VI residents:
- Transportation is once again one of the most significant issues preventing people from entering the workforce
- Skills like resume writing, interviewing, and job searching were not perceived as needs by the participants

Level of information about Career Center
- One participant has accessed the Career Center via her case manager
- Transportation is again a barrier for people getting here
- Not everyone knows where this is or what it offers; it is not perceived as an asset
- Note: Participants are aware that information about the Career Center and other resources is found in the monthly newsletter, but most don’t read it. Email might be an option, since many can access with phone
2. Job training

Needs of HOPE VI residents:

- There was a general sense that job training programs are needed because so many job opportunities require experience
- No ideas as to what types of job training are wanted/needed by HOPE VI residents, except for the participant who wants training in working with computers

Level of information about job training

- There is no awareness of any job training programs available to Taunton/HOPE VI residents

3. Career education

Needs of HOPE VI residents

- Awareness that certain career paths necessitate an Associate’s or Bachelor’s degree, but many barriers perceived
- Transportation is most significant challenge, since the closest campuses are in Brockton (Massasoit Community College), Fall River (Bristol Community College), and UMass Dartmouth
- Child care is another barrier, especially because those who work would need to take classes at night
- Cost and the prospect of debt are also major hurdles

Level of information about career education

- No awareness of ways to finance a college education (beyond loans)
- No awareness around types of programs offered

Ideas for improvement

- Financial incentives for earning college credits
- Perhaps online education could work, but computer/internet access is limited

4. Job placement

- Word-of-mouth is the most popular means through which participants and their family/friends learn about jobs
- Newspaper and internet cited, but the latter is not always accessible
- Particularly difficult for non-English speakers to find jobs; their only opportunities are reportedly in food service and cleaning
APPENDIX E: HOPE VI resident interview findings

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E-1. Interview protocol

*Note: Interview questions were derived from the HOPE VI panel study.*

**RELOCATION**

I’d like to start by asking you about the re-location process.

1. How long ago did you move from Fairfax Gardens?
   Where do you live now?
   Have you lived anywhere else besides that place, since you left Fairfax Gardens?

2. How did you find the apartment/house where you live now?
   Did you receive assistance from the housing authority with finding a place to live?

3. Did you receive help with the move itself from the housing authority?
   (reference PACKING, TRANSPORTING, MOVING COSTS)

4. Can you tell me about your moving experience?
   What went well with the move?
   Did anything not go well?

5. Have you had any contact with the housing authority or HOPE VI program since you moved from Fairfax Gardens? (DESCRIBE)

**HOUSING**

6. How would you compare your apartment/house now to the apartment/house you lived in at Fairfax Gardens? (reference CONDITION; SIZE)

7. What do you like about your apartment/house?
   Is there anything you do not like about it?

**HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION**

8. How many people, including you, lived in your home at Fairfax Gardens?
   *(NOTE: Year 2 and Year 3: Instead, ask, "How many people, including you, now live in your home?")*

9. Has this changed?
SAME PEOPLE?

LOSS OF PEOPLE?

ADDITION OF NEW PEOPLE?

10. Is there anyone who no longer lives with you?
    Other than personal reasons, why does s/he no longer live with you?
    (perhaps LEASE? APARTMENT SIZE? Other?)

NEIGHBORHOOD

11. (If close to Fairfax Gardens) Is the area where you live now part of the same neighborhood that Fairfax Gardens was in?
12. How is the area where you live now different from Fairfax Gardens?
    What do you like about living in this neighborhood?
    Is there anything about the neighborhood that you do not like?
13. Is the neighborhood convenient for what you need to do on a regular basis?
    (perhaps WORK; SHOP; CATCH A BUS; GO TO DOCTOR, etc.)
    Is this different from when you lived in Fairfax Gardens?
14. Because of the move, have you changed where you go for the things you need on a regular basis; for example, where you shop or go to church?
15. Do you think you are safer now than when you lived in Fairfax Gardens?
    What is it that makes you feel safer, or less safe?

NEIGHBORS

16. How have your family relations been affected by your move?
    How have these changes affected you?
    How often do you visit or talk with relatives?
17. How have your friendships been affected by your move?
    How have these changes affected you?
    How often do you visit or talk with old friends?
18. Turning to your new neighborhood, do you ever talk with any of your neighbors?
Is this different from when you lived in Fairfax Gardens?

19. Do you ever socialize with neighbors or help each other out sometimes?
   
   (EXAMPLES: COOKOUTS/VISITS/WATCH CHILDREN/SHARE FOOD)

   [if YES] About how often do you do this?

   [NO] Why?

20. Do you socialize with neighbors or help each other out more or less than you did when you lived in Fairfax Gardens?

   [for YES or NO] Why do you think this has changed?

21. Have your child’s friends changed since you moved?

   Does your child spend time with family members or old friends?

   Does your child have friends in this neighborhood?

   Do you like your child’s friends?

**EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME**

22. Were you employed, or unemployed, when you left Fairfax Gardens?

   (NOTE: Year 2 and Year 3: Instead, ask, "Are you now employed, or unemployed?")

23. Has that changed?

   Ask for DETAILS OF CHANGE

24. [IF EMPLOYED] What is your job?

   Ask for
   
   LENGTH OF TIME AT JOB

   LIKES

   DISLIKES

   FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME?

   How did you find your job?

   (perhaps ADVERTISEMENT? FRIEND? FAMILY?)

25. [if UNEMPLOYED, and NON-ELDERLY] What would you say is the main reason you are not employed?
26. Has the move affected your employment in any way? (perhaps TRANSPORTATION?)

**HARDSHIP**

27. Since you moved from Fairfax Gardens, [or IN THE LAST YEAR] has there ever been a time when you didn’t have enough money to pay bills, such as rent, telephone, or utility bills?

How often has this happened?

What did you do?

Is this different from when you lived in Fairfax Gardens?

[if YES] What do you think the difference is due to?

28. Since you moved [IN THE LAST YEAR] has money ever been so tight that you were unable to buy enough food for you and your family?

[if YES] How often has this happened? What did you do?

Is this different from when you lived in Fairfax Gardens?

[if YES] What do you think the difference is due to?

**HEALTH**

29. Did you or any of your family members have any major health problems when you lived at Fairfax Gardens?

30. Has there been any change in your health, or any of your family members’ health, since you moved from Fairfax Gardens? [IN THE LAST YEAR]

(DESCRIBE: ASTHMA? INJURIES? DEPRESSION?)

What do you think brought on the change?

31. Has your stress level changed since your move? [IN THE LAST YEAR]

[if YES] What do you think brought on the change?

(DESCRIBE: perhaps MAJOR LIFE EVENTS, JOB/INCOME CHANGE; ILLNESS; CHANGE IN HOUSEHOLD; MOVE)

32. Have you missed work or school since your move [IN THE LAST YEAR] because of any health concerns?
[if YES] Did that cause you any problems at work/school?

33. When you lived at Fairfax Gardens, did any of your children have a major health problem?

   [NOTE: ASK EACH HEALTH QUESTION FOR EACH CHILD REPORTED TO HAVE A MAJOR HEALTH PROBLEM]

34. Has your child missed any school since your move [IN THE LAST YEAR] because of any health concerns? [if YES] Why do you think that has happened?

34. Has any health problem affected your child’s learning or behavior in school since your move? [IN THE LAST YEAR]

   [if YES] (DESCRIBE: ADD (ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER? LEARNING DISABILITY?)

   Why do you think that has happened?

EDUCATION

   [NOTE: ASK SEPARATE SERIES OF QUESTIONS FOR EACH CHILD IN THE HOUSEHOLD.]

35. What school or educational program (for pre-K) does your child attend?

   Is it located nearby? (PRE-SCHOOL? PUBLIC? PRIVATE? CHARTER?)

   How was the school selected?

36. Is this a different school from the school your child attended while you lived at Fairfax Gardens? [LAST YEAR]

   [YES] Why is your child attending a different school now?

   (REGULAR ADVANCEMENT; RELOCATION)

   In what ways is this school different from the old one?

37. How is your child doing in school?

   (Reference GRADES; GRADE LEVELS/PROMOTION; SPECIAL RECOGNITION/AWARDS)
38. Do you think the move has had any effect on your child’s schooling experience?  
   *(SKIP IF RECENT MOVER)* (DESCRIBE: POSITIVE; NEGATIVE; PLACED IN/OUT OF SPECIAL CLASSES)

39. Does your child participate in any type of program during school hours or after school, such as music or art programs, sports, etc.?  
   Is this new for your child since the move? *[IN THE LAST YEAR]*

40. Since your move *[IN THE LAST YEAR]*, has there been any change in your child’s behavior in school?  
   *[if YES]* (DESCRIBE: EVER IN TROUBLE; SUSPENDED; EXPELLED; GETTING ALONG WITH OTHERS)
   What do you think brought on the change?

41. Are you involved with the school in any way?  
   *[if YES]* (DESCRIBE: TEACHER MEETINGS, P.T.A., ETC.)
   Has moving affected your involvement with the school? *(SKIP IF RECENT MOVER)* *[if YES]* (DESCRIBE: MORE INVOLVED; LESS INVOLVED; SAME)

42. Does your child ever ask you for help with homework? Do you look over your child’s schoolwork?

OUTLOOK FOR REDEVELOPMENT

43. Do you want to return to the Hope VI development once it is built? Why or why not?  
   *[if YES]* To which site would you like to return? Dewert Avenue? The site near the Bus Terminal? Either one?

44. Where would you like to be in five years?

45. Is there anything you would like to add about anything we have talked about?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND FOR TALKING ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH ME.

   *Have respondent sign receipt. _____*

   *Write gift card number on receipt. _____*
E-2. Interview consent form

Note: this form was also provided in Spanish for Spanish-speaking interviewees.

Taunton HOPE VI Evaluation –
Consent for participation in interview research

Please read this form carefully and ask the interviewer any questions you may have. Then, sign two copies of this form. You will be given one copy to keep for your records. Thank you for your cooperation!

- I volunteer to participate in interviews conducted by the UMass Dartmouth Urban Initiative. I understand that these interviews are designed to gather information about my experiences with the Taunton Housing Authority HOPE VI project. The information I provide will be summarized in annual reports to the Taunton Housing Authority and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

- I understand that while the interviewer knows my first name, I will not be identified by name in the notes being taken, in the audiotape, or in any written reports. These efforts will ensure that my confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure.

- I understand that interviews will last approximately 30-45 minutes, and will never exceed one hour. Notes will be written during the interview. An audiotape of the interview may be recorded; if so, it will be destroyed upon completion of the HOPE VI evaluation project. If I don't want to be taped, I may express this to the interviewer and no tape will be made.

- I understand that if I feel uncomfortable in any way during the interview session, I have the right to decline to answer any question or to end the interview.

- I understand that I have been selected to participate in one interview per year, and that the Urban Initiative will contact me in 2014 and again in 2015 to schedule a total of two more interviews.

- I have read and understand the explanation provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

- I have been given a copy of this consent form.

My Signature ___________________________ Date __________________________

My Printed Name _______________________

Signature of the Investigator _______________________

Gift card number ___________________________ Sign to acknowledge receipt of gift card
E-3. Interview findings

2013 HOPE VI Resident Interviews

I. Introduction and methods

One component of the HOPE VI evaluation process is resident interviews. Based on protocols developed by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the interviews illustrate the experiences of a subset of participants and contextualize data being collected on residents over the grant period. The UMass Dartmouth Urban Initiative’s evaluation plan stipulates that such interviews are repeated in 12 months and again in 24 months, with the expectation that the same heads of household will participate each time.

Following HUD guidelines, the Urban Initiative randomly identified 25 heads of household to be interviewed between March and June 2013. To protect the identities of interviewees as much as possible, the Urban Initiative used only resident ID numbers provided by the Taunton Housing Authority (THA) to randomly select participants. THA then contacted the selected individuals and scheduled their interview times, only providing the Urban Initiative with interviewees’ first names. In cases where selected individuals chose not to participate, the Urban Initiative randomly identified additional candidates for THA to schedule.

The random selection of interviewees yielded a racially and ethnically diverse pool of interviewees. Only one interviewee was male, reflecting a very high proportion of female heads of household in the target population. Nineteen interviews were conducted in English, while six interviews were conducted in Spanish, in accordance with the language preference stated by each participating respondent. Depending on the availability and preference of participants, interviews took place at either THA offices or by phone. Each participant was compensated for the one hour (on average) of interview time with a Wal-Mart gift card valued at ten dollars.

All interviews were audio-recorded with verbal permission requested at the time of interview. Voluntary informed consent was also obtained by means of a written and signed document (see Appendix E-2). Each interviewee received a copy of this document for his or her records. Respondent confidentiality was assured by use of unique identifying numbers to protect the identity of participants.

Questions were adopted from HUD protocols (see Appendix E-1); they were aimed at comparing participants’ experiences at Fairfax Gardens to their experiences since relocating. Categories included: experience with the relocation process; housing conditions and satisfaction; household composition; neighborhood characteristics; relationships with family, friends, and neighbors; employment; hardship; housing; health; education; and future outlook. When applicable, interviewees were asked about their children’s experiences in these categories.

III. Findings

Findings are presented by category and subsequently by question. Interviewee responses were aggregated, summarized, and presented in a way that strives to protect the anonymity of participants.
A. Relocation process – Interviewees—and all HOPE VI residents—were relocated during or before June 2012 in order to facilitate the demolition of Fairfax Gardens.

1A. How long ago did you move from Fairfax Gardens?
All but one respondent (24/25) report that it has been about a year since leaving Fairfax Gardens; their answers range from nine months to fourteen months. The one exception was an answer of “two years.”

1B. Where do you live now?
Eighty percent of respondents (20/25) are still living in Taunton. Of the five respondents not living in Taunton, all live within 25 miles of their former city. This finding indicates that our interviewees were generally geographically representative of the population of HOPE VI residents: approximately 70 percent continues to live in Taunton based on baseline data collected in the summer of 2012.

1C. Have you lived anywhere else besides your present housing, since you moved from Fairfax Gardens?
All but one respondent (24/25) report having moved directly to their present housing from Fairfax Gardens. The only respondent who has moved since leaving Fairfax Gardens did so in order to avoid a potential health hazard.

2A. How did you find the apartment/house where you live now?
Respondents gave a wide variety of answers, including help from THA (9 responses), help from a friend (5), Craigslist (4), and one or two responses each for “newspaper,” “realtor,” “online,” and “saw a ‘For Rent’ sign from the street.”

2B. Did you receive assistance from the housing authority with finding a place to live?
Seventeen of the respondents (more than two-thirds) said that they received direct assistance from the THA. The other eight respondents were all offered help but opted to search on their own.

3. Did you receive help with the move itself from the housing authority?
All 25 respondents received help from THA for the move to their new residences. The typical respondent received money for rental of a truck, plus packing materials such as boxes and tape.

4A. Can you tell me about your moving experience? What went well with the move?
Nearly all respondents reported that everything went well, and as planned, on moving day.
4B. Did anything not go well?

Nearly all respondents reported that nothing went badly. The respondent who made two moves to different Taunton addresses reported challenges with both moves.

5. Have you had any contact with the housing authority or HOPE VI program since you moved from Fairfax Gardens?

All 25 respondents report close, regular, and helpful contacts with their THA case managers. Regular visits are scheduled and kept, even with respondents who live outside Taunton. The THA case managers are uniformly reported to be reliable and helpful with finding resources, budgeting, asking about and assisting respondents’ children, and similar assistance. Other regular contacts arrive via email and US Mail.

B. Housing conditions and satisfaction

6. How would you compare your apartment/house now to the apartment/house you lived in at Fairfax Gardens?

Sixteen respondents are happier with their current residences, citing size (bigger), condition (better), quiet, and safety as typical reasons. Six respondents preferred their apartments at Fairfax Gardens, typically for greater square footage and for sitting on a ground floor. Three respondents felt that the two locations were “about the same.”

7A. What do you like about your apartment/house?

Respondents gave a variety of answers. Common themes were that the heating system worked, the kitchens and bathrooms were cleaner and equipped with more modern facilities, insects and other pests were absent, and the residences were quiet and “felt like home.”

7B. Is there anything you do not like about it?

When invited to express their dislikes, 20 percent of respondents (5/25) had nothing negative to say about their residences. By far the greatest complaint, made by nearly one-third of respondents (8/25), was lack of an in-building washer and dryer, forcing respondents to travel to and from coin-operated laundromats. Four respondents reported not getting along with a landlord or neighbor. Just a few respondents made all other complaints, such as, “I have to pay utilities, or “basement floods.”

C. Household composition

8. How many people, including you, lived in your home at Fairfax Gardens?

Of 25 respondents, three reported living alone. Eight respondents reported a two-person household, five reported a three-person household, seven reported a four-person household, one reported a five-person household, and one reported a household of six. Most of the multiple-member households consist of a single mother and a child or children. Only one respondent was male; his young son lives with him. Only two female
respondents identified her household as a husband and wife, with children, while living at Fairfax Gardens, and the husband in one of these households has left since the move to a new residence.

9. Has this changed?

Of 25 respondents, 21 report no changes in household numbers or composition. One reported a loss of one person from her household – her spouse. Three reported additions to their households: in one household, a nephew; in another household, a son; in a third household, a newborn baby, plus an adult boyfriend was added to the lease prior to moving out of Fairfax Gardens.

10A. Is there anyone who no longer lives with you?

In addition to the aforementioned spouse, a different respondent reported a spouse no longer living with her, and another respondent noted that a child had been absent from home for several months.

10B. Other than personal reasons, why does s/he no longer live with you?

These changes appear to be due to personal reasons.

D. Neighborhood characteristics

11. (If in Taunton) Is the area where you live now part of the same neighborhood that Fairfax Gardens was in?

Of 25 respondents, only two identified themselves as living in the same neighborhood as Fairfax Gardens.

12A. How is the area where you live now different from Fairfax Gardens?

Most respondents characterized neighborhood differences in positive terms. Common themes were that their new neighborhoods were quieter, walkable, and safer and more relaxed than Fairfax Gardens. Of the two respondents who identified themselves as living in the same neighborhood as Fairfax Gardens, one felt that her experience was “much the same,” while the other thought her street was less noisy; she liked being able to walk for food shopping, and that the school bus stop for her child was nearby.

12B. What do you like about living in this neighborhood?

Respondents often cited feelings of safety, serenity, and calm while living in their neighborhoods. Some expressed greater trust in their neighbors and believed it was better for their children to be exposed to this kind of living environment (as well as better schools). Several respondents felt their neighborhoods were more walkable, or “closer to the things I need.”
12C. Is there anything about the neighborhood that you do not like?

Of 25 respondents, two said that they did not like their neighborhoods but provided no specific objections to living there.

13A. Is the neighborhood convenient for what you need to do on a regular basis?

All respondents but one (24/25) reported that their neighborhoods were convenient. Walkability to stores, bus stops, and medical services was often cited.

13B. Is this different from when you lived in Fairfax Gardens?

Of 25 respondents, more than half (14) reported that their new neighborhoods were noticeably more convenient than what had been experienced at Fairfax Gardens. Seven respondents felt that the level of convenience was about the same. Four respondents felt that living in Fairfax Gardens had been somewhat more convenient, though none expressed a great difference in convenience.

14. Because of the move, have you changed where you go for the things you need on a regular basis?

Respondents were nearly evenly split. Eleven reported that they had made significant changes in shopping habits, while twelve others did not. Two respondents reported their shopping habits remained “about the same.” The few respondents who referenced church attendance did not change their chosen houses of worship.

15A. Do you think you are safer now than when you lived in Fairfax Gardens?

Almost all respondents felt safer than, or at least as safe as they had been while living at Fairfax Gardens. Fifteen respondents felt safer; eight felt “about the same;” one gave no answer; and one reported feeling “a little” less safe.

15B. What is it that makes you feel safer, or less safe?

Those respondents who felt safer noted the absence of gunshots, public fights, threatening people, loud music and behavior, and visible drug behavior as the primary elements that caused them to feel safer in their new residences. Respondents were realistic about the pervasiveness of drug activity, emphasizing a shared belief that their new neighborhoods were different only because drug use was not blatant, obvious, and conducted in public view. Those who felt less safe in their new neighborhoods noted that there had been a strong police presence at Fairfax Gardens, or stated philosophically, “Bad people are everywhere, unfortunately.”

E. Family and friendship relationships

16A. How have your family relations been affected by your move?

Nine respondents felt that family relations were improved, largely because family members felt more comfortable visiting the new residence rather than Fairfax Gardens. Fifteen respondents felt unaffected by the new move, either because they had no family
living nearby or because visiting family members were equally willing to visit either Fairfax Gardens or the new residence. One respondent reported being negatively affected because a relative is lacking transportation to visit her new city. There were no respondents who said that family members found the new locations more threatening to visit than Fairfax Gardens.

16B. How have these changes affected you?

Nine interviewees felt positively affected by closer relationships with family members and the presence of supportive neighbors, and by feeling “more normal” and no longer stigmatized by residence at Fairfax Gardens. One respondent said that her school-aged daughter was the one most positively affected by the move. Fifteen respondents felt personally unaffected by moving from Fairfax Gardens.

16C. How often do you visit or talk with relatives?

Of 25 respondents, more than two-thirds (17) visit or talk daily or frequently with their relatives. One respondent reported communications once or twice per week. Two respondents reported communications once or twice per month. Two respondents reported “occasional” visits or talks, while three respondents indicated that they have no communications with relatives.

17A. How have your friendships been affected by your move?

Seven respondents reported having less contact now with friends, four respondents enjoy greater contact, and seven respondents said that their contact with friends remains relatively unchanged. The remainder indicated that this question did not apply.

17B. How have these changes affected you?

Twelve interviewees reported no change in how they were affected by the move with regard to friendships. Seven respondents reported that not seeing old friends as often made them sad, or was challenging in a way that was difficult to express in words. One respondent described the challenge as being hardest on her daughter. Another respondent reported that her old friends felt more comfortable and welcome when visiting her in her new neighborhood, and so the result of the move was that time spent with her friends became more enjoyable. Three respondents said that they kept in touch even though old friends were now scattered. One cautious respondent said that she now enjoys the company of friends who were once neighbors at Fairfax Gardens but doesn’t want other former residents to learn where she now lives.

17C. How often do you visit or talk with old friends?

Responses varied greatly. Seven respondents said that they interact daily with their friends. Four respondents reported that they talk to old friends two to three times per week, while five respondents said that they do so weekly, or on the weekends. Two respondents see their friends from one to three times per month. Four respondents gave more casual answers such as “sometimes” or “when possible,” and three respondents indicated that they have no old friends with whom they visit or talk.
F. Neighborhood characteristics

18A. Turning to your new neighborhood, do you ever talk with any of your neighbors?

Overall, twenty-one respondents talk with neighbors at varying levels of frequency, while four respondents do not talk to their neighbors at all. Among those who speak with neighbors, two said that they are getting to know their neighbors better (implying that they expect to interact to an increasing degree over time). Three respondents appear to have found a particular person or persons with whom they talk because of a shared interest, such as dog ownership. Eight respondents interact with neighbors only on a casual, “hi and bye” basis. One respondent seeks active conversations at a local community center.

18B. Is this different from when you lived in Fairfax Gardens?

All four respondents who do not talk to their new neighbors at all said that their behavior has changed, as all interacted with neighbors at Fairfax Gardens. Of the twenty-one respondents who now speak with neighbors, ten say that this is not different from their behavior at Fairfax Gardens, while eleven say that their behavior has changed. The eleven respondents whose behavior has changed voiced a wide variety of reasons for making changes, often due to no longer needing coping or defense mechanisms that they had used at Fairfax Gardens.

19A. Do you ever socialize with neighbors or help each other out sometimes?

Of 25 respondents, eleven report that they socialize with their neighbors or help each other out, while fourteen respondents say that they do not. Comments indicate occasional behavioral exceptions among respondents who answered either “yes” or “no.”

19B. About how often do you do this?

All affirmative responses indicate that socializing occurs just occasionally, based upon circumstances (e.g. snow-shoveling) more than planned events. However, four respondents reported socializing up to once per week, and two reported socializing as often as two to three times per week.

19C. Why/why not?

Among the fourteen respondents who say that they do not socialize with or help out neighbors, some indicated little interest (comments include “I’m not a social bug,” and “That’s just the way things are.”). Some explained that they were struggling with trust issues, while others blamed schedules that didn’t mesh or locations that inhibited socialization, such as living in the third floor apartment of her building.

20A. Do you socialize with neighbors or help each other out more or less than you did when you lived in Fairfax Gardens?

When phrased in this way, 20 percent of respondents indicated that they socialized with or helped others more in their new locations, while 60 percent (15/25) said that they did
so more at Fairfax Gardens. The remaining 20 percent said that it was “about the same.” It may seem odd that a majority of respondents state that they socialized and helped more when living at Fairfax Gardens, given that only 10.2 percent of respondents surveyed as part of the Fairfax Gardens HOPE VI Evaluation Baseline Report issued in July 2012 agreed that their neighbors could be trusted. However, in spite of trust issues, 42 percent of respondents in the 2012 survey nevertheless felt that their neighbors showed a willingness to help each other, and over 80 percent reported having either helped or been helped by a neighbor with a household or yard chore. It will be of interest to see whether successive 12-month and 24-month surveys show increases in beneficial social interactions with neighbors by respondents.

20B. Why do you think this has changed?

Respondents indicated that helping behaviors were more prevalent at Fairfax Gardens for two main reasons: because neighbors expressed greater needs, and because there was more opportunity to ask for assistance given the abundance of publicly-shared space, which is less available in the places where interviewees now live.

21A. Have your child’s friends changed since you moved?

Eleven respondents answered “Yes” without comment or qualification, while six respondents answered “No” or “not relevant” (the latter response was given by parents of particularly young children). Four respondents with multiple children per household reported that the experiences of individual children varied. The question was not applicable to four respondents without dependent children.

21B. Does your child spend time with family members or old friends?

Of 25 respondents, seventeen answered this question affirmatively, though five noted that such visits were infrequent. Three respondents answered “No” but tried to qualify the answer, by pointing out, for example, that the child had acquired new friends. The question was deemed not to be relevant by five respondents without dependent children or with an extremely young child.

21C. Does your child have friends in this neighborhood?

Thirteen respondents answered “Yes,” while three respondents answered “No.” Five respondents with multiple children per household reported that the experiences of individual children varied. The question was not relevant to four respondents.

21D. Do you like your child’s friends?

Nineteen respondents said that they liked their child’s friends, and a twentieth respondent said that she liked “some of them.” No respondent said that she did not like her child’s friends. The question was deemed not to be relevant by five respondents.
G. Employment and income

22. Were you employed or unemployed when you left Fairfax Gardens?

Of 25 respondents, twelve were employed, while eleven were unemployed. Two respondents were not in the labor force: one was retired, the other was disabled.

23A. Has that changed?

Employment status changed for four interviewees: two people who were unemployed became employed, one left a job to care for a special needs child, and a fourth left a job due to a disability (this respondent was applying for Social Security Disability Insurance at the time of the interview).

24A. If employed: What is your job, and how long have you been working there?

Five of the twelve employed respondents were support staff for healthcare related businesses, with no level of responsibility greater than assistant or attendant. Two respondents worked in supermarkets, and two in franchise fast food restaurants. The other three respondents provided services as a hotel housekeeper, a general maintenance worker, and an assistant at a youth center.

Nine of the twelve employed respondents (75 percent) had held their jobs for three years or less. The other three employed respondents had spent six, twelve, and sixteen years, respectively, at the same job.

24B. If employed: What do you like about your job?

Respondents’ answers were typically general in nature and emphasized positive personal feelings that were derived from helping people and from associating agreeably with managers or coworkers. Only one respondent emphasized that her job gave opportunity for achievement of professional goals; she was proud of her achievement because "I never thought I could do it." One respondent noted the practical consideration that her job offered flexibility for childcare, while another respondent liked that her son participates in activities at the youth center where she works. One of the twelve employed respondents did not answer the question, while two gave answers that led the interviewer to believe that there was little that they liked about the job besides the fact of having a source of income.

24C. If employed: What do you dislike about your job?

Respondents’ answers were quite varied. Two themes emerged: negative interactions with managers or co-workers were reported by four respondents, and concerns about the amount of pay received for their work, or the means of payment, were also voiced by four respondents. Other issues included monotony after many years spent at the same job, wanting full-time work but only receiving part-time hours, and feeling trapped in a dead-end job by lack of education.
**24D. Are you employed full-time or part-time?**

Among the twelve respondents who currently are actively employed, nine are part-time employees, two are full-time employees, and one respondent’s work is seasonally part-time or full-time depending upon demand.

**24E. How did you find your job?**

Among the twelve respondents who currently are actively employed, more than half (8) found their job through a personal contact (one respondent was a former client of her current employer). The others five identified and applied for their positions through traditional means.

**25. If unemployed: What would you say is the main reason you are not employed?**

Ten unemployed respondents (excluding the three respondents not in the labor force) gave a wide range of responses. Three answers were vague: “There’s not much work available,” “No success in job interviews,” and “I moved to another city.” One respondent said that she couldn’t get job interviews, so she enrolled in school. Three respondents cited the needs of dependent children as taking up time that would otherwise be spent working. Two respondents said that the breakdown of their cars kept them from getting to work. One respondent noted an injury.

**26. Has the move affected your employment in any way?**

Of 25 respondents, only two said that the move had affected their employment. One respondent, now unemployed, had been a home health aide who moved to Fall River specifically to be closer to work than she had been when living in Taunton. However, an issue unrelated to the move necessitated leaving this job. The other respondent, who is now employed and who found her job through a friend, said she found it easier to obtain the job because of the move (although she remained in Taunton). Fifteen respondents said that the move had no effect on employment, while eight said that the question was not applicable to their situations.

**H. Material hardship**

**27A. Since you moved from Fairfax Gardens, has there ever been a time when you didn’t have enough money to pay bills, such as rent, telephone, or utility bills?**

Sixty percent (15) of interviewees reported that at times they had not been able to pay bills, while 40 percent (10) had not experienced this hardship.

**27B. How often has this happened?**

Although fifteen respondents reported in 27A that at times they had not been able to pay bills, sixteen respondents gave answers to 27B (the sixteenth said that there were “occasional,” minor lapses in paying rent). Of the sixteen respondents, five said that lack of money had happened once, often referencing a specific crisis. One said that it tended to happen in winter. One indicated that it happened quarterly, two said “every two to
three months,” and one said “monthly.” Four said that they “occasionally” could not pay bills, while two respondents said that they were constantly behind on payments.

27C. What did you do?

Eighteen respondents gave answers. Some respondents described multiple strategies they employed to deal with late payments. Answers included going without services and budgeting better to muddle through, contacting the creditor to make arrangements to pay, contacting a THA case manager for help, and seeking help from an employer or family members.

27D. Is this different from when you lived at Fairfax Gardens?

Of 25 respondents, thirteen said their experience was different from what had been customary at Fairfax Gardens. Most of these respondents stated or implied that they had not fallen behind in payments when living at Fairfax Gardens, although one respondent said that her bill-paying delinquency was greater at Fairfax Gardens. Nine respondents said that the experience was the same at either location, while for three respondents the question was not applicable to their situations.

27E. If yes, what do you think the difference is due to?

Among those who answered affirmatively, four ascribed the difference to costs associated with a one-time crisis. Four other respondents found that their costs were now steady and predictable, or they had learned to budget more effectively. Three respondents are now coping with increased utilities costs or higher rent. Others now face financial challenges due to unemployment (2) or an additional dependent (1).

28A. Since you moved, has money ever been so tight that you were unable to buy enough food for you and your family?

Almost one-third (8) said that they had experienced times when they could not buy enough food, while 17 said that they had not experienced this problem.

28B. If yes, how often has this happened?

The eight respondents characterized the frequency of hunger they experienced as follows: once (2), twice (1), “two or three times” (2), monthly (1), quarterly (1), and regularly (1).

28C. What did you do?

The eight respondents described multiple strategies they employed to deal with hunger. Answers included buying in bulk and shopping smarter, going to a food pantry twice a month, contacting a THA case manager or family members for help, and using food stamps (one respondent borrowed food stamps from a friend).
28D. Is this different from when you lived at Fairfax Gardens?

Of the eight respondents who have experienced times when they could not buy enough food, six said it is different (harder) now, while two said it is now less of a problem for them.

28E. If yes, what do you think the difference is due to?

There are many different, individual reasons; no one theme emerged from the interviews. Reasons for the difference include: the respondent had friends at Fairfax Gardens who helped her, but are now unavailable; the respondent had family members nearby who helped her, but she has moved far from them; the respondent made more money at her job when living at Fairfax Gardens; the respondent was employed while at Fairfax Gardens but has now been laid off; the respondent experienced a one-time crisis; and more people have been added to the respondent’s household, resulting in higher costs.

I. Housing and health

29. Did you or any members of your family have any major health problems when you lived at Fairfax Gardens?

Twelve reported no major health problems at Fairfax Gardens, while another 12 reported a major health problem, either resolved or ongoing, that affected them or a family member. One respondent declined to answer.

30A. Has there been any change in your health, or any of your family members’ health, since you moved from Fairfax Gardens?

Of 25 respondents, 14 reported no changes in their health or the health of family members. Eleven reported changes: five said the changes were for better health, three said the changes were for the worse, two did not characterize the change, and one reported a child being diagnosed with ADHD.

30B. What do you think brought on the change?

The eleven respondents who reported changes in health noted many different, individual possible explanations for their experiences. No one theme emerged from the interviews. For example, one respondent said that the move from Fairfax Gardens was good for her daughter, while another respondent reported that her daughter has gained significant weight, is depressed, bored, cries, and constantly complains that she wants to move back to Fairfax Gardens and live with her friends. Some respondents attributed reduction of panic attacks and asthma attacks to getting away from secondhand smoke and frightening situations in Fairfax Gardens. One respondent, whose allergies now seem a little worse, realistically stated that this could be due to anything, and not necessarily caused by the move.
31A. Has your stress level changed since the move?

Of 25 respondents, 14 reported that their stress levels had changed for the better, sometimes dramatically, since leaving Fairfax Gardens. Six reported that stress had increased. Three said it was about the same, and two said that they had their “ups and downs,” and did not attribute these changes to the move.

31B. What do you think brought on the change?

Respondents reported many different, personal reasons for presence or absence of stress in their lives. Respondents now experiencing less stress emphasized positive aspects of moving away from Fairfax Gardens, such as feeling safer, sleeping better, and no longer living in fear each day in their new neighborhoods. Respondents who felt about the same emphasized taking personal responsibility for their moods regardless of their living conditions. Among those who felt more stress, no one reason emerged from the interviews. Reasons for feeling more stress included being laid off from work, money and budget troubles, no longer being with friends, legal issues, and “Everything stresses me!”

32A. Have you missed work or school since your move because of any health concerns?

Of 25 respondents, four reported that they had missed work or school due to a cold (2), depression (1), or a minor injury (1). Eleven respondents reported that they had not missed work or school. Ten respondents said that the question was not applicable to their situations.

32B. If yes, did that cause you any problems at work/school?

Of the four respondents who missed work or school, no consequences at work or school were reported.

33. When you lived at Fairfax Gardens, did any of your children have a major health problem?

The health of forty-eight children was considered (newborns born after the move from Fairfax Gardens were excluded). Thirty-seven children had no major health problems while at Fairfax Gardens. Eleven children experienced major health problems, including asthma (5), autism (2), recurring ear infections (2), pneumonia (1), and an unspecified complaint (1).

34A. Has your child missed any school since your move because of any health concerns?

Nine children were reported to have missed school since the move. One child missed six weeks of school due to mononucleosis. One respondent’s son missed 10 days of school, and her daughter missed six days of school, due to unspecified illnesses. Three other sick children’s illnesses were unspecified. One child had ADHD, another had tonsillitis, and another had flu-like symptoms a few times.
34B. If yes, why do you think that has happened?

Only one health concern was linked in a respondent’s mind to the move, while another respondent whose children had not been ill positively attributed their improved health to the absence of secondhand smoke subsequent to the move from Fairfax Gardens.

34C. Has any health problem affected your child’s learning or behavior in school since your move?

Two children have been diagnosed with ADHD, although one parent said that “normal teen changes” also explained her child’s behavioral problems. A third child was acting out, though not diagnosed with any condition, and a fourth is currently under evaluation. One child continues to feel the effects of mononucleosis. Finally, a respondent pointed out that the move and a new school environment were beneficial in improving her child’s learning and behavior.

34D. If yes, describe.

Children with ADHD were reported to have had difficulty transitioning to a new school. One child had a motor skills problem, evident when holding a pencil or scissors. One child was tested for autism, but the learning difficulty was ultimately attributed to an English-Spanish language barrier.

34E. Why do you think that has happened?

One respondent felt that her own stress had negatively impacted her child. Another parent said that even her pediatrician had no explanation, while one interviewee attributed her child’s health-based learning problems to normal changes associated with growing up.

J. Education of children

35A. What school or educational program (for pre-K) does your child attend?

All children appeared to be enrolled in age-appropriate educational institutions. No child was reported to be home-schooled.

35B. Is it located nearby?

Most children were enrolled in schools located near their homes. They typically walked to school, were driven by a parent, or were transported by public school bus or van. One child requires a 25-minute drive to a special education facility. One older student commutes to college in Boston.

35C. How was the school selected?

The special education facility was specifically selected to address the needs of the one student who attends school there. Two respondents said that they evaluated school districts and took the quality of schools into account while searching for a place to live, looking for desirable skills training for their children. Otherwise, no special choices were made; the children attend district schools near their neighborhoods.
36A. Is this a different school from the school your child attended when you lived at Fairfax Gardens?

Most of the children who remain in Taunton are in a different school due to the natural progression of age and educational attainment, while geography was the only reason for changing schools among those who left Taunton.

36B. If yes, why is your child attending a different school now?

Of eighteen responses, “regular advancement” was cited eleven times, and “relocation” six times. One child was moved to a school in a nearby town to address specific discipline problems.

36C. In what ways is this school different from the old one?

Most of the respondents report no unusual differences. The child at the special education facility receives care that meets his specific needs. Two respondents report that their children no longer need special language assistance. One child has been placed in a school that handles ADHD cases better than other schools in the area. Another respondent appreciates that so much more is provided at the new school.

37. How is your child doing in school?

Respondents referenced the status of thirty-two children. Twenty-five were described as doing well in school, with several reports of honor roll status and positive feedback from teachers. Four children were described as doing poorly, with issues such as focus and behavioral problems hindering their progress. Three children were given mixed assessments, such as “her grades are fine, but she argues a lot.”

38. Do you think the move has had any effect on your child’s schooling experience?

No perceived pattern emerges from the data; instead, for every child who dislikes his new school, there is another child (sometimes in the same family) who is doing well in a new environment.

39A. Does your child participate in any type of program during school hours or after school, such as music or art programs, sports, etc.?

Eight respondents reported that their children participated in no programs of this type. Among those children who did have access to programs, one child was reported to take instrument lessons and two were in chess clubs. The other sixteen reports cited participation in sports, often through the YMCA or Boys and Girls Club.

39B. Is this new for your child since the move?

There were four reports of children who did not participate in programs either before or after the move, so this represented no change for them. There were also nine reports of children who participated both before and after the move, so this continuation of activity also represented no change for them. There were six reports of children who did not
participate in programs before the move, but who do so now; one respondent said that her child would not have been able to participate had it not been for the move.

40A. Since your move, has there been any change in your child’s behavior in school?

Respondents almost uniformly stated that there had been no change in their children’s behavior. Three respondents said no but added reports of a child’s difficulty with transitioning in the school; one of these children was bullied by a larger classmate in second grade. One respondent said “Yes,” and then gave her report of her child’s difficulty in adapting to the new school.

40B. If yes, please describe.

Specific accounts were given for two of the four children who reportedly experienced behavioral changes. The child who was bullied then lashed out at other children. A child who had unspecified adaptation issues responded by being absent from classes.

40C. What do you think brought on the change?

Changes were generally ascribed to transitioning to a new school environment, with bullying specifically cited in one case.

41A. Are you involved with the school in any way?

Of twenty respondents, ten said that they were involved with the school and ten said that they were not. Judging from further discussion, the degree of parental involvement seems to be on a behavioral gradient, as responses ranged from parents who accompany field trips and attend teacher nights to parents who have talked with a teacher or given the school a cell phone number to contact. Among non-participants, explanations included work schedules that prohibit participation as well as hopefulness that they will find a way to participate in the future.

41B. Has moving affected your involvement with the school?

Only two respondents said that moving affected their involvement.

41C. If yes, describe.

One respondent said that the move seemed to make it easier for her to be involved with schooling of her son and daughter. Another respondent now seems more likely to communicate with her child’s teacher and to ask for help.

42A. Does your child ever ask you for help with homework?

Of twenty respondents, seventeen said that their child or children asked for help with homework, while three said that they did not. Two respondents (one who helps with homework, and one who does not) noted the availability of homework help at Taunton’s Boys and Girls Club.
42B. **Do you look over your child’s schoolwork?**

Of twenty respondents, nineteen said that they looked over their children’s homework, mostly for accuracy, although one proud mother said that she checked it primarily to celebrate her children’s good work, rather than to correct it. Only one respondent said that she did not check homework, but added that she asks her children whether they have done their homework.

**K. Outlook for redevelopment and the future**

43A. **Do you want to return to the HOPE VI development once it is built?**

Only five interviewees want to return to the new HOPE VI development, while eight do not want to return. Twelve don’t know or are unsure whether they wish to return (although some express strong preferences for site location, should they decide to return).

43B. **Why or why not?**

The five respondents who wish to return to the new development cited the beauty of the new housing designs and anticipated having larger living spaces with more privacy. One of these respondents is confident that the criminal and socially disruptive behavior that characterized Fairfax Gardens will not be tolerated in the new housing developments. The twenty respondents who either do not wish to return or who are unsure of their decision tended to cite two issues: 1) an unwillingness to give up their Section 8 vouchers and the freedom of mobility that comes with them (11 respondents), and 2) a deep-seated concern that although the housing will be brand new, the same dangerous people who populated much of Fairfax Gardens will be allowed to return, renewing traumatic living conditions caused by drugs and crime (7 respondents). Other individual concerns: too many (unspecified) variables in play to make a decision now, the need to engage family members in decision-making, a concern that new housing will not be as walkable and accessible to amenities, and the fact that in her present location one interviewee’s family lives nearby.

43C. **If yes, to which site would you like to return?**

Of the five respondents who clearly stated that they wish to return to HOPE VI housing, two definitely want to live at the former Fairfax Gardens/DeWert Avenue site, while two others definitely want to live at the site being developed at Parcel 6A (near the bus terminal). One respondent would live in either location. Responses are similarly mixed among those who are unsure of their future plans, but as individuals the respondents often hold strong opinions and express clear preferences.

44A. **Where would you like to be in five years?**

Respondents’ goals are widely varied and difficult to summarize. Individual answers, in no particular order, are summarized below:

- Earning a GED and working to become a nurse
- Married and happy
• Comfortable
• Studying to become a medical translator; wants to see children’s educational and career aspirations realized
• Living in a house, preferably in a space that is bigger than current housing and includes a yard
• Owning a house and learning English
• No long-term personal goals, but hoping that a child will be attending college
• Owning and running a business
• Returning to school to become a CNA, phlebotomist, or other type of medical professional
• In the same apartment, working part-time
• Healthy, with one child having graduated from college and the other enrolled in college
• Enjoying improved quality of life
• Living in a first floor apartment with a balcony
• Possibly owning a home with help from the Section 8 program; working more hours; having child graduate from college
• Experiencing less financial stress; doing something that makes a difference
• Working part-time; knowing how to drive a car
• Earned GED, working in a career path, ready to make a down payment on a house
• Improved education; better job; improved education and job opportunities for children
• Renting to own (plans to ask THA case manager for help); attending community college in pursuit of criminal justice degree
• Finished with school and working in a better job; married; living in a decent home; helping others
• Working in a new career field; earning more money; married; owning a home
• Owning a home; earned GED; pursuing career in criminal justice field
• Employed
• Earned Associate’s degree; employed in the medical field (perhaps as a medical secretary); financially stable; working toward Bachelor’s degree
• Working and preparing to buy a house

45. **Is there anything you would like to add about anything we have talked about?**

Of 25 respondents, thirteen had no further comments. Twelve respondents made final summary statements, summarized below in no particular order:

• The move was a good experience; THA made it painless and did the heavy lifting
• Respondent used the opportunity to reemphasize desire to live at new development located on Parcel 6A, because DeWert Avenue is too far from amenities
• Help from THA is appreciated; respondent is happy with the HOPE VI program.
• THA case managers are very positive and helpful; respondent pleased with the fact that help is provided even outside Taunton
• Respondent’s grown son visits and calls more since the move
• Section 8 voucher allows more freedom, got respondent out of difficult situation at Fairfax Gardens; loves the support given by THA’s lead case manager
• Safety is a priority and loitering was a major problem at Fairfax Gardens; respondent expressed need for better selection of residents in new development
• Help of case managers has been tremendous, despite status as immigrant; respondent used this opportunity to express appreciation
• Respondent cited examples of dangerous conditions at Fairfax Gardens: child had bicycles stolen, saw men running with guns, witnessed a shooting, saw children playing with a real gun; as a result, afraid those conditions will be present at new development
• Everyone should have equal opportunity to move to new developments, regardless of whether they lived at Fairfax Gardens
• Dedication of case manager has been appreciated; respondent feels the case manager truly cares
• Security must be priority for new development; respondent suggests more activities for children and teens, with the goal of focusing them and giving them access to good opportunities

IV. Conclusion

Several common themes emerged from these interviews. First, Taunton Housing Authority case managers were frequently lauded for the high levels of support provided, especially with the process of relocation. Second, most interviewees are more satisfied with their current housing and neighborhoods as compared to conditions at Fairfax Gardens (before relocating), and for the most part, their moves have had little impact on employment, health, and quality of life for interviewees and their families. Third, this increased level of satisfaction, coupled with a general reluctance to lose one’s Section 8 voucher and a fear that conditions at both new developments will revert to previous levels of dysfunction, translates to a general disinclination toward returning to the HOPE VI developments. Finally, the barriers faced by this selection of HOPE VI residents are numerous and substantial; as a result, very few report making long-term plans and setting long-term goals.

The Urban Initiative will revisit these issues through follow-up interviews with the same 25 individuals in the spring of 2014.