Fairfax Gardens HOPE VI Evaluation—Second annual report

December 2014

Prepared for the Taunton Housing Authority

Prepared by the

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ABOUT THE PUBLIC POLICY CENTER

The PPC is the University’s applied social science research, technical assistance, and public service unit based in the College of Arts and Sciences. It is an interdisciplinary applied public policy research and technical assistance provider that seeks to inform evidence-based policymaking at the state, regional, and local level through collaborative engagements with public, private, and non-profit partners.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Public Policy Center at UMass Dartmouth (previously the UMass Dartmouth Urban Initiative) has served as the evaluator for the Taunton Housing Authority’s HOPE VI project since the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded this grant in 2011.

The Urban Initiative issued a report in July 2012 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. The first annual evaluation report followed in December 2013, and revealed that residents made gains in employment despite the significant barrier presented by transportation. Last year’s findings also highlighted the positive impact of Taunton Housing Authority case managers. Neighborhood-level findings included a decline in the number of businesses surrounding Lenox Green as well as decreased activity in sectors like construction, manufacturing, transportation, and warehousing (likely vestiges of the economic recession).

This second annual report is intended to further investigate 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.

Key findings – HOPE VI residents

- The proportion of households for which employment is the primary source of income stabilized at close to 50 percent, which is about 20 percentage points higher than at baseline.
- While income increased significantly for this group between 2013 and 2014, HOPE VI residents on average still only earn 22.9 percent of the average income for Taunton residents.
- The needs assessment revealed that 13 percent of residents cannot pay their bills on time. While this figure decreased from baseline, there was an increase of 7.6 percent in loan debt, a 16 percent increase in the rate of car repossessions, and a 12 percent increase in the rate of student loan default. Furthermore, resident interviews revealed a growing number of households that have experienced difficulty affording food. Taken together, these results indicate persistent financial trouble for at least a subset of the HOPE VI population.
- Resident engagement with service agencies besides the THA decreased 25 percent since baseline.
- Results from interviews and focus groups revealed that THA case managers continue to be valuable resources for residents.
- Childcare access and transportation issues continue to present significant barriers to employment.
- There have been slight increases in access to medical and dental care and a 7 percent decrease from baseline in the percentage of residents suffering from anxiety or fear.
- The percentage of relocated households living in neighborhoods with poverty rates higher than Fairfax Gardens decreased between 2013 and 2014, but the proportion of relocated households living in neighborhoods with poverty rates greater than 20 percent increased.
- Residents are more satisfied with their current neighborhoods than Fairfax Gardens.
Key findings – Neighborhood

- The number of businesses within one mile of 100 DeWert Avenue (i.e., Fairfax Gardens) increased 14 percent in the last year. Health care and social assistance was the largest sector.
- Retail continues to lead as the largest employer for the one-mile radius surrounding Fairfax Gardens.
- Crime rates in Taunton in 2013 represent a five-year low. Fairfax Garden crime rates were typically above Taunton rates until the complex was demolished.
1.0 OVERVIEW

1.1 Annual report overview

This report marks the third year of the Taunton HOPE VI evaluation, which began with a baseline report issued by the Public Policy Center at UMass Dartmouth (formerly the Urban Initiative) in July 2012. This report serves as both a formative and summative evaluation: the findings presented herein reflect opportunities for the Taunton Housing Authority (THA) and its partners to adjust program processes to address unforeseen needs or more effectively accomplish its goals, and the report also indicates the degree to which THA is on track to achieve its intended outcomes by the project’s conclusion in 2016.

Data sources for this report include interviews and focus groups conducted with HOPE VI residents and secondary data from sources like the US Census and the Taunton Police Department. Whenever possible, this data is compared to last year’s annual report as well as the baseline report issued in July 2012. And while the primary focus areas of the evaluation are HOPE VI residents and the neighborhood of the original Fairfax Gardens development, citywide data is added for context when available.

1.2 Site & development overview

In the summer of 2012, Fairfax Gardens—the distressed housing development targeted by this HOPE VI project—was demolished following the relocation of residents occupying its 150 units. In its place now stands Bristol Commons, an 88-unit development that was fully occupied in the spring of 2014. Because the new development was built to have lower density, THA made up for the lost units by building Lenox Green, a four-building, 72-unit development sited one mile away on a brownfield near Taunton’s downtown.

1.3 Definitions

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**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:** the area surrounding the former Fairfax Gardens development (now Bristol Commons); 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:** the staff of the Public Policy Center (PPC) at UMass Dartmouth
2.0 HOPE VI RESIDENTS – UPDATED DATA & ANALYSIS

2.1 Overview of purpose, methods, sources

The profile of HOPE VI residents is based on data collected and shared with the evaluation team by THA. A series of 25 interviews with HOPE VI heads of household provided context for this data, as did focus groups on the topics of early childhood, health and wellness, and workforce development.

2.2 Demographic & socioeconomic profile of HOPE VI residents

As of October 2014, there were 141 households and 435 individuals classified as the HOPE VI resident population. This compares to 134 households and 416 individuals as of October 2013. This year’s numbers reflect six households that moved to Bristol Commons and were added to the HOPE VI caseload accordingly. Also, one person was added to the roster but did not require services from THA.

2.2.1 Age and gender

The total resident population grew by 4.6 percent since 2013, with growth among all age groups. As of October 2014, 58 percent of HOPE VI residents are children (younger than 18 years old), compared to 56.7 percent in 2013. The proportion of adults in the HOPE VI resident population increased by 1.2 percent in the last year. Table 2-1 reflects past and present breakdowns of residents’ ages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th># of HOPE VI residents, baseline</th>
<th># of HOPE VI residents, 2013</th>
<th># of HOPE VI residents, 2014</th>
<th>% change from 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age 18 and under</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 19-64</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 65+</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The gender breakdown of the resident population is unchanged since 2013 (see table below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>% of HOPE VI residents, baseline</th>
<th>% of HOPE VI residents, 2014</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>

5 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 November 2014.

4 Source for all current data on HOPE VI households and residents: Taunton Housing Authority, November 2014

5 “Baseline” refers to data presented in the Urban Initiative’s baseline evaluation report, published in July 2012
2.2.2 Race/ethnicity

The racial and ethnic backgrounds of HOPE VI residents remain relatively unchanged and far more diverse than those of Taunton residents as a whole.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% of HOPE VI residents, 2013</th>
<th>% of HOPE VI residents, 2014</th>
<th>% of Taunton residents, 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White, not Hispanic</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>85.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American, not Hispanic</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
<td>33.1%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.69%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>43.0%</td>
<td>43.7%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.3 Education

Compared to last year, fewer HOPE VI adult residents—30.6 percent, versus 33.2 percent in 2013—lack a high school diploma or GED. Therefore, the percent of adults with a high school credential increased by 4.8 percent since 2013. Turnover in the adult population likely explains the 2.3 percent decrease in the proportion of adults with some college or an Associate’s degree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th># of HOPE VI residents, 2013</th>
<th>2013 %</th>
<th># of HOPE VI residents, 2014</th>
<th>2014 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No HS diploma</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS diploma/GED</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>55.4%</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>60.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college/Associate’s</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.4 Employment & income

The percentage of employed HOPE VI residents rose from 25.8 percent in 2011 to 45.7 percent in 2014, and full-time employment decreased from 38.8 percent in 2012 and 2013 to 30.4 percent in 2014. Nearly 81 percent of residents who are working have been at their current job for at least six months, which is consistent with the figure from 2013.

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6 Source for all current data on HOPE VI households and residents: Taunton Housing Authority, November 2014
7 Source: 2008-12 ACS
8 Source for all current data on HOPE VI households and residents: Taunton Housing Authority, November 2014
The average (mean) HOPE VI household income for 2014 is $14,969.88, a significant increase from 2013 ($10,065). HOPE VI residents now earn 22.9 percent of the city average income ($65,457)\(^9\) as opposed to 15.3 percent in 2013. Thus, despite some improvement, household income of HOPE VI residents remains much lower than that of Taunton as a whole, which may pose significant financial challenges.

Data on income source were provided for 149 households. Employment is the primary source of income reported for 49 percent of households, which is similar to the 2013 figure and 20 percentage points above baseline. Reliance upon Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) as a primary source of income declined from 50 percent in 2012 to 11.4 percent in 2014. Resident interviews revealed a growing number of households that have experienced difficulty affording food, which may be linked to the decrease in households receiving this assistance.

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

![Figure 2-1. Primary source of income\(^{10}\)](image)

Results of the needs assessment provide a bit of context. Nearly 87 percent of residents say they can pay bills on time, which is an increase of 4.8 percent since baseline. While this increase is a positive development, 13 percent of residents are not able to pay their bills on time. This, coupled with the increase in loan debt and the rate of car repossessions, suggests financial trouble for at least a subset of the HOPE VI population.

\(^9\) Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey (ACS; http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml)
\(^{10}\) Source: THA, November 2014
2.3 **Community engagement**

According to the 2014 needs assessment, nearly 12 percent of residents engaged with service agencies besides the THA, which is a decrease of 25 percent since baseline.

2.4 **Children**

In 2014, children comprised 57.9 percent of the HOPE VI population, compared to 21.6 percent for the City of Taunton. This represents a slight increase since last year (56.7 percent).

Table 2-5 depicts the population of HOPE VI youth by age and compares the present population of youth to past data. The slight changes likely reflect the aging of children into new categories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>% of HOPE VI youth, baseline</th>
<th>% of HOPE VI youth, 2013</th>
<th>% of HOPE VI youth, 2014</th>
<th>% change, 2013-2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age 0-5</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 6-12</td>
<td>39.8%</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
<td>46.0%</td>
<td>-2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 13-18</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Early education and childcare was again the subject of one of the three focus groups conducted with HOPE VI residents whose households include young children. A brief summary of findings can be found in section 2.9, while a memo documenting the proceedings of this focus group is located in Appendix D.

2.5 **Transportation**

In addition to transportation information collected in the 2014 needs assessment (see section 2.6.3), a few findings related to household transportation were identified through focus groups (see Appendix D) and interviews with heads of households (see Appendix E).

In response to a survey on transportation needs conducted by THA in 2013, monthly transportation vouchers have been issued to 13 HOPE VI residents to improve their access to opportunities and resources. This transportation survey was not completed in 2014.

2.6 **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 and November

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11 Source for all current data on HOPE VI households and residents: Taunton Housing Authority, November 2014
12 Source for all current data on HOPE VI households and residents: Taunton Housing Authority, November 2014
13 Source: 2008-12 ACS
14 Source: THA, November 2014
15 Source for all current data on HOPE VI households and residents: Taunton Housing Authority, November 2014

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2014\textsuperscript{16} to determine current levels of need in these areas, allowing for a comparison of current needs against baseline conditions. Needs assessment comparisons in this report are between baseline data and data from 2014.

\textbf{2.6.1 Employment & job training}

Nearly 16.6 percent of residents surveyed reported working full-time, and part-time employment has remained stable at nearly 32 percent of workers. This contrasts with THA data presented in section 2.2.4 in which 30.4 percent of residents reported having full-time jobs in 2014. Nonetheless, the employment rate among HOPE VI residents continues to rise. Job satisfaction decreased slightly since baseline, and desire among workers for advancement within their current organization declined by 19 percent. There was a slight increase in the percentage of residents seeking employment as well as a 6.5 percent drop in desire for help with job searches. Furthermore, there was a 7.6 percent reduction in the number of workers who want a better job.

Importantly, childcare and transportation issues remain significant barriers to work as the percentage of residents dealing with these issues increased by 25.6 percent and 12.6 percent, respectively. The percentage of residents with other barriers to employment declined five percent since baseline. Figure 2-2 shows percentage of residents facing specific barriers to employment.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{Figure2_2.png}
\caption{Barriers to Employment}
\end{figure}

More residents report that they know how to fill out an application and have a current resume compared with baseline. Fewer residents are enrolled in job training programs, but more of those who are enrolled receive financial aid and are satisfied with their training choice. The percentage of residents who have defaulted on student loans increased from 9 percent to 10.1 percent. The percentage of residents attending training programs regularly

\textsuperscript{16} Assessments were completed by 148 residents in 2014.
remains essentially stable around 77 percent. Interest in owning a business, being trained in construction trades, and attending vocational training has declined significantly.

### 2.6.2 Education

There was a slight increase in the percentage of residents with a high school diploma or GED. There was a 50 percent decrease in the percentage of residents enrolled in adult education classes, but only 8 percent were enrolled at baseline. The percentage of residents experiencing difficulty reading has remained stable at nearly 20 percent, and significantly fewer need help with speaking, reading, or writing English. However, the proportion of residents facing difficulty with basic math has increased since baseline. Figure 2-3 reflects the educational needs of residents.

**Figure 2-3. Educational needs**

![Educational needs chart]

### 2.6.3 Transportation

The number of residents with a license increased by 5 percent, and access to a reliable car decreased by nearly two percent. There was a 47 percent increase in the proportion of residents making car payments, which adds a significant expense to personal budgets. Also, there were moderate increases in familiarity with public transportation and the willingness to commute.

### 2.6.4 Childcare

The percentage of residents with dependent children has remained stable at nearly 71 percent. There was a nearly 11 percent increase in demand for childcare in order to work or attend school and a 17 percent decrease in the percentage of residents with children in daycare. Focus group results revealed that transportation remains a barrier to accessing childcare. Furthermore, fewer residents reported having access to friends or family who are able to watch their children. Nearly 12 percent of residents have children on a waiting list for subsidized daycare, which represents a 106 percent increase in demand. Interest in taking a
parenting skills class declined by 18 percent. Figure 2-4 details some of the results related to childcare.

**Figure 2-4. Childcare needs**

![Bar chart showing childcare needs comparison between 2011 and 2014.](image)

### 2.6.5 Health

Nearly 97 percent of residents have health insurance, and access to medical care continues to improve. This is evidenced by slight increases in the percentage of residents who have a primary care physician (currently 89.4 percent of residents), receive regular checkups (currently 87.4 percent of residents), have a dentist (currently 83.5 percent of residents), and have dental checkups (currently 81 percent of residents). There was a slight increase in the percentage of residents reporting incidence of asthma, high blood pressure, and arthritis, and the incidence of diabetes remained essentially unchanged.

The percentage of residents suffering from anxiety or fear decreased 7 percent from baseline. Resident interest in mental health counseling decreased 23 percent from baseline, and interest in smoking cessation counseling decreased by 34 percent. There was a slight increase in desire to participate in substance abuse counseling, but the percentage of residents seeking these services remains small (1.6 percent in 2014).

### 2.6.6 Housing

Section 8 vouchers were the primary tool utilized to subsidize housing costs for relocated HOPE VI households, which is reflected by the finding that the percentage of residents with vouchers rose from 6.4 percent at baseline to 67.6 percent in 2014. At the same time, the percentage of residents on a waiting list for Section 8 decreased significantly from 73 percent to 24 percent. Not surprisingly, there was also a significant decrease in the percentage of residents who wanted a housing choice voucher. The lifetime home ownership rate remains below four percent, but there has been a 15.3 percent increase in desire to own a home since baseline.
There was a two percent decrease in the percentage of residents ever utilizing an emergency shelter (now the rate is slightly below 24 percent). Lifetime utilization of a spousal abuse shelter remained stable at around two percent of residents.

2.6.7 Financial and legal

The percentage of residents with a checking account has increased by nearly one quarter, while the percentage of residents with savings accounts remained fairly stable. Nearly 95 percent of residents say they are able to pay their bills. However, only 87 percent say they can pay on time. This represents an increase of 4.8 percent since baseline.

There was a 20.8 percent decrease in the percentage of residents with credit card payments, but a 7.6 percent increase in loan debt. Lastly, the bankruptcy rate remained essentially stable at nearly 2.5 percent, while there was a slight increase in the rate of car repossessions, from 6.9 percent to nearly 8 percent. Interest in credit counseling among residents has decreased by nearly 22 percent since baseline despite the increase in both repossessions and loan debt.

Rates of conviction, probation, and interest in domestic violence counseling increased since baseline, but these rates are all below five percent.

2.6.8 Other needs

There was a 36 percent increase in the rate of voter registrations among residents as well as a 9.8 percent increase in the proportion of respondents indicating interest in voting. Participation in social and community organizations remained static near three percent. Resident engagement with service agencies besides the THA has decreased by 25 percent since baseline. Interest in family counseling decreased by nearly 20 percent, and residents were not interested in marriage counseling.

2.8 Relocation

The evaluation team again identified the Census tracts of all HOPE VI households to compare poverty rates of their current neighborhoods to conditions experienced at Fairfax Gardens.

Before HOPE VI residents were relocated and Fairfax Gardens was demolished, 14.4 percent of residents in that Census tract were below the poverty level. This is a relatively low for HOPE VI neighborhoods, which generally recorded baseline poverty rates above 30 percent.

The percentage of HOPE VI households living in neighborhoods with poverty rates higher than Fairfax Gardens decreased from 73.4 percent in 2013 to nearly 69 percent in 2014. However, the percentage of households living in a neighborhood with a poverty rate higher than 20 percent increased dramatically from 38 percent in 2013 to 52 percent in 2014. The average neighborhood poverty rate also increased slightly, from 18.2 to 19 percent, and the 2014 neighborhood poverty rates range from 1.9 to 66.5 percent.

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17 Source: 2007-2011 ACS
18 Source: http://www.urban.org/uploadedpdf/411002_hopevi.pdf, p. 29
19 Source: 2008-2012 ACS
There was a marked decrease in the percentage of households living in a neighborhood with a higher concentration of childhood poverty, from 73.4 percent in 2013 to 45 percent in 2014. The average child poverty rate of 22.5 percent changed little from 2013, and rates currently range from zero to 77.1 percent.

Research conducted by HUD highlights the importance of new neighborhood conditions for relocating families. Improvements in mental and physical health, housing quality, social bonds, and feelings of safety are observed upon relocation of voucher-holding households to communities with lower concentrations of poverty. Because the majority of households relocated to neighborhoods with greater concentrations of poverty, these benefits may not be attained.

2.9 Focus group findings

Focus groups were conducted to provide context to the data analyzed in this report. Three groups were convened, one each for the areas of health and wellness, employment, and child development. Key findings from each focus group are summarized here, while three memos detailing each session’s proceedings are located in Appendix D. It is important to note that these results reflect interactions with a subset of the HOPE VI resident population.

A key theme that emerged across groups is the helpfulness of THA case managers. Residents know they can access services through these individuals and rely on them for information. Greater access to gyms and fitness equipment was identified as a theme in the health and wellness group, and both transportation and information on scholarships were identified as necessary in order to improve access. Furthermore, lack of a checking account was mentioned as a barrier to gym access. Residents also wanted access to a nutritionist. Importantly, a stigma still exists regarding seeking counseling for mental health issues, thus additional education about counseling is necessary. Two major themes of the early childhood focus group were the need for interaction with other parents and the need for transportation in order to access child care.

Participants in the workforce focus group noted that the Career Center is not widely known or accessed. They also noted that language is a major barrier for employment and connecting to resources. Child care was identified as a necessity in order to attend English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. Finally, participants were interested in homeownership, specifically the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program.

2.10 Interview findings

THA case managers continue to be important resources for residents. All 25 respondents reported maintaining contact with their THA case managers, and 48 percent specifically reported either a close or helpful relationship. These relationships are especially important given that the proportion of respondents who moved multiple times increased from four percent in 2013 to 36 percent in

---

20 Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey
2014. Moving can be costly and disruptive and may be particularly burdensome on the 14 respondents who are single parent heads of household.

Despite multiple moves, most respondents continue to report greater satisfaction with their new neighborhoods than with Fairfax Gardens because they are quieter, safer, and more relaxed. The majority of residents also continue to describe their current residences as superior to their dwelling at Fairfax Gardens due to improved noise level, state of repair, pest control, living space, and amenities. Moreover, the majority of respondents described their new neighborhoods as more convenient. Unfortunately, only 40 percent socialize with neighbors (e.g., playdates for children), which is a decrease from 2013.

More respondents are currently working (60 percent) than in 2013 (48 percent), and more have full-time jobs (nearly 27 percent) now than in 2013 (nearly 17 percent). Thirteen employed respondents provided information about job tenure, and five of those individuals had been at their present jobs for more than three years. The main barriers to employment were disability, illness, or childcare. Unfortunately, respondents still struggle financially. Sixty four percent of respondents reported not having enough money at some time in the last year to pay bills, which is similar to the figure from 2013. Additionally, 48 percent of respondents report not having enough money in the last year to purchase enough food, which is an increase of one-third over 2013.

Regarding health and well-being, six respondents reported negative changes in health over the past year, and four reported positive changes. Eight respondents reported an increase in stress since last year. Nearly 60 percent of the 29 children referenced by respondents were reportedly doing well in school, which is a 19 percent decrease from 2013.

Finally, the majority of respondents who did not return to Fairfax Gardens claimed that the main reason is because they feared losing their Section 8 voucher, which they claim grants freedom and mobility.

The Public Policy Center will revisit these issues through follow-up interviews with the same 25 individuals in the spring of 2015. A detailed account of interview findings is located in Appendix E.
3.0 FAIRFAX GARDENS NEIGHBORHOOD – DATA & ANALYSIS

3.1 Overview

A key goal of HOPE VI is to improve conditions in the neighborhood surrounding the targeted development by improving the quality of the site and services. These changes are measured by aggregating secondary data and comparing it to previous years. In the final year of the evaluation, the neighborhood resident survey conducted at baseline will be repeated to gauge changes in perceptions among those who live in the neighborhoods around Bristol Commons and Lenox Green.

3.2 Limitations

Similar to last year’s report, the data used in this section represents the most recent information available, but it still lags in its ability to reflect changes resulting from this HOPE VI project (for example, at the time of this report, the available census data is as recent as 2012). Nevertheless, the data sources match those of last year’s report as well as baseline data, so the figures offer valid comparisons and indications of trends.

3.3 Defining the neighborhood

The Public Policy Center continues to define the HOPE VI neighborhood as the community within one mile of the former site of Fairfax Gardens (DeWert Avenue). This area includes five Census tracts, (see map in Appendix A), so we present neighborhood data in two ways. First, we include the entire population 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 Lenox Green), and 6138 (which includes Parcel 6A). When possible, we also present the data using geographic information systems (GIS) to select only the households within the one-mile radius of Fairfax Gardens. In addition to the data presented in this section, disaggregated census tract data can be found in Appendix B.

3.3 Demographic & socioeconomic profile of neighborhood residents

The population living within a mile of the former Fairfax Gardens site increased significantly from 4,862 in 2012 to 7,261. These figures can be used to examine change in neighborhood population after completion of the HOPE VI project.

3.3.1 Age & gender

Median ages currently range from 33.3 years in tract 6140 to 42.6 years in tract 6133, with an average across all five tracts of 39.7 years. The maximum median age for 2013 was 44.1 years, meaning that the range narrowed in 2014. The current median age for the

---

22 Source: Missouri Census Data Center, 2008-12 ACS for 2014 data; 2006-10 ACS for 2012 data
23 NOTE: Using the Missouri Census Data Center CAPS program for radii less than 3 miles can introduce errors in which the inclusion of exclusion of a single point accepts or rejects an entire census block group (e.g., 1,500 persons).
neighborhood compares with 40 years citywide. The table below demonstrates that the neighborhood’s population has become older over time.

Table 3-1. Age breakdown, Fairfax Gardens neighborhood

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>% of neighborhood, baseline 25</th>
<th>% of neighborhood, 2013 26</th>
<th>% of neighborhood, 2014 27</th>
<th>% change, 2013 to 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age 0-17</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 18-64</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>65.7%</td>
<td>65.2%</td>
<td>-0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 65+</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>-7.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Appendix B-1 for tabular a representation of this data.

3.3.2 Race/ethnicity & immigration

In the area within a one-mile radius of DeWert Avenue, racial diversity is similar to that of the city as a whole, and the level of diversity declined in the last year. The proportion of residents within this radius identifying as White (not Hispanic) increased from 80.8 percent in 2013 to 85.2 percent in 2014. The proportion of residents identifying as Hispanic decreased from 8 percent to 6.2 percent. Lastly, the percentage of residents identifying as Black declined from 6.5 percent to 5.3 percent. See Appendix B-2 for the distribution of race and ethnicity in the census tracts around Fairfax Gardens.

The proportion of residents in the five census tracts born outside of the United States increased from 12 percent in 2012 and 2013 to 14.5 percent in 2014. Just over 23 percent of residents in the five tracts speak a language other than English, which is up slightly from 21.3 percent in 2013. Furthermore, 11.5 percent speak English less than “very well,” which also represents an increase from 9.3 percent in 2013. Focus group data revealed that difficulty speaking English may pose a significant barrier for these individuals. Please see Appendix B-3 for additional data.

3.3.3 Education

While the neighborhood around Fairfax Gardens has a lower high school completion rate than Taunton as a whole, it also has a higher rate of Bachelor’s degree attainment. The proportion of neighborhood residents without a high school diploma increased slightly in the last year, the proportion with a high school diploma decreased slightly, and the proportion with a Bachelor’s degree increased 4.8 percent. The table below shows educational attainment among neighborhood residents.

Source 2006-10 ACS
26 Source: 2007-11 ACS
27 Source: 2008-12 ACS
Table 3.2. Educational attainment, Fairfax Gardens neighborhood

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% of neighborhood, 2013</th>
<th>% of neighborhood, 2014</th>
<th>% of Taunton residents, 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No HS diploma</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS diploma/GED</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
<td>40.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college/Associate’s</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree+</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information on educational attainment in this neighborhood, see Appendix B-4.

3.3.4 Employment & income

Citywide median household income has remained relatively static since baseline. Median incomes of the five tracts around the former Fairfax Gardens site have fluctuated greatly since baseline as well as over the past year.\(^35\) The greatest changes over the last year were a 23.5 percent decrease in income in tract 6140 and a 6 percent increase in income in tract 6134. Median income for the HOPE VI population increased by 48.7 percent in the last year, but only rose to $14,969.88.\(^36\) Please see Appendix B-5.1.1 and Appendix B-5.1.2 for more information. Figure 3-1 shows median household income by census tract.

\(^{32}\) Source: 2007-11 ACS

\(^{33}\) Source: 2008-12 ACS

\(^{34}\) Source: 2008-12 ACS

\(^{35}\) Source: 2008-12 ACS for 2014 data; 2007-11 ACS for 2013 data; 2006-10 ACS for baseline data

\(^{36}\) Source: Taunton Housing Authority (THA)
The average unemployment rate across the five tracts increased from 10 percent in 2013 to 11.3 percent in 2014.\textsuperscript{37,38} Unemployment currently ranges from 9.1 percent in tract 6139.01 to 16.3 percent in 6138.

The poverty rate across all tracts increased by 3.3 percent to 16.8 percent in 2014, and the rates currently range from 3.6 percent in tract 6133 to 24.6 percent in tract 6140.\textsuperscript{39} 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

The research team is working with Kevin Shea of the Office of Economic and Community Development to obtain the information and will update this document once it is received.

#### 3.5.2 Profile of commercial sector\textsuperscript{40}

There are 1,410 businesses operating within one mile of 100 DeWert Avenue as of November 2014, which is an increase of 14 percent from 2013. Health care and social assistance was the largest sector, representing 20.4 percent of businesses within the defined area. Other services (13 percent) as well as professional, scientific, and technical services

\textsuperscript{37} Source: 2008-12 ACS for 2014 data; 2007-11 ACS for 2013 data
\textsuperscript{38} NOTE: Neighborhood-level unemployment rates come with a significant margin of error and are thus limited in their ability to reflect true conditions in these tracts.
\textsuperscript{39} Source: 2008-12 ACS for 2014 data; 2007-11 ACS for 2013 data
\textsuperscript{40} Source: ReferenceUSA (http://www.referenceusa.com/Home/Home)
round out the top three sectors. The largest change was a 7.5 percent decline in the number of businesses in the health care and social assistance sector, and the second largest change was a 3.5 percent increase in retail trade. Table 3-3 shows the number of establishments for each sector.

Table 3-3. Commercial sector by classification

| NAICS CLASSIFICATION (#) | Baseline | | | | 2013 | | | | 2014 | | |
|---------------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|                           | Number   | Percent        | Number         | Percent         | Number         | Percent         | Number         | Percent         | Number         | Percent         | Number         | Percent         |                  |
| Accommodation and Food Services (72) | 40 | 2.8% | 39 | 3.2% | 46 | 3.3% |
| Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (56) | 66 | 4.7% | 52 | 4.2% | 57 | 4.0% |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting (11) | 3 | 0.2% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 0.1% |
| Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation (71) | 16 | 1.1% | 9 | 0.7% | 11 | 0.8% |
| Construction (23) | 127 | 9% | 91 | 7.4% | 97 | 6.9% |
| Educational Services (61) | 34 | 2.4% | 29 | 2.3% | 34 | 2.4% |
| Finance and Insurance, Real Estate and Rental and Leasing (52-53) | 111 | 7.8% | 106 | 8.6% | 122 | 8.7% |
| Health Care and Social Assistance (62) | 346 | 24.4% | 345 | 27.9% | 287 | 20.4% |
| Information (51) | 22 | 1.6% | 19 | 1.5% | 23 | 1.6% |
| Management of Companies and Enterprises (55) | 1 | 0.1% | 1 | 0.1% | 1 | 0.1% |
| Manufacturing (31-33) | 31 | 2.2% | 18 | 1.5% | 28 | 2.0% |
| Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction (21) | 2 | 0.1% | 1 | 0.1% | 1 | 0.1% |
| Other Services (81) | 160 | 11.3% | 141 | 11.4% | 183 | 13.0% |
| Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (54) | 170 | 12% | 156 | 12.6% | 170 | 12.1% |
| Public Administration (92) | 77 | 5.4% | 72 | 5.8% | 78 | 5.5% |
| Retail Trade (44-45) | 110 | 7.8% | 90 | 7.3% | 152 | 10.8% |
| Transportation and Warehousing (48-49) | 37 | 2.6% | 20 | 1.6% | 22 | 1.6% |
| Unclassified | 37 | 2.6% | 24 | 1.9% | 45 | 3.2% |
| Wholesale Trade (42) | 27 | 1.9% | 22 | 1.8% | 52 | 3.7% |
| TOTAL | 1417 | 100% | 1,235 | 100% | 1,410 | 100% |

3.5.3 Employment by sector

Retail continues to lead as the largest employer for the one-mile radius surrounding Fairfax Gardens, representing 23.7 percent of all employment in this area. The greatest change was in manufacturing, which moved from the fourth largest employer in 2013 to the second largest employer in 2014. The health care and social assistance sector and the accommodation and food services sector both remain in the list of top four employers in 2014. Please see Table 3-4 for more information.


Fairfax Gardens HOPE VI Evaluation—2014 Annual report 23
Table 3-4. Employment by Sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAICS CLASSIFICATION</th>
<th>NUMBER EMPLOYED, 2013&lt;sup&gt;42&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>PERCENT OF EMPLOYED, 2013&lt;sup&gt;43&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>NUMBER EMPLOYED, 2014&lt;sup&gt;44&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>PERCENT OF EMPLOYED, 2014&lt;sup&gt;45&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation and Food Services</td>
<td>612</td>
<td>11.58%</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>8.77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and Support and Waste</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>3.92%</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management and Remediation Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>1.11%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>7.89%</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>5.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Services</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>3.93%</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>4.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance and Insurance, Real Estate and Rental and Leasing</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>3.54%</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care and Social Assistance</td>
<td>831</td>
<td>15.72%</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>1.42%</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of Companies and Enterprises</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>576</td>
<td>10.89%</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>14.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Services (except Public Administration)</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>5.84%</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>5.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>3.71%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>3.71%</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>8.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>1,029</td>
<td>19.46%</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>23.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and Warehousing</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>3.63%</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>4.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclassified</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>3.65%</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>5,281</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>1,311</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.6 Housing market

3.6.1 Profile of housing stock<sup>46</sup>

The number of housing units within the five tracts has remained stable since baseline. There was no change greater than one percent in any tract between 2013 and 2014. Currently, housing unit count ranges from 1,354 in tract 6139.01 to 2,790 in tract 6133. Furthermore, the only tract to experience a decrease in housing stock in the last year was 6139.01 (see Table 3-5).

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<sup>42</sup> Source: 2007-11 ACS via PolicyMap
<sup>43</sup> Source: 2007-11 ACS via PolicyMap
<sup>44</sup> Source: 2008-12 ACS via PolicyMap
<sup>45</sup> Source: 2008-12 ACS via PolicyMap
<sup>46</sup> Source: 2008-12 ACS for 2014 data; 2007-11 ACS for 2013 data; 2005-09 ACS for baseline data

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Table 3-5. Number of housing units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census tract</th>
<th>Baseline # housing units 47</th>
<th>2013 # housing units 48</th>
<th>2014 # housing units 49</th>
<th>% change, 2013 to 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6133</td>
<td>2,738</td>
<td>2,773</td>
<td>2,790</td>
<td>0.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6134</td>
<td>1,436</td>
<td>1,433</td>
<td>1,439</td>
<td>0.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6138</td>
<td>2,464</td>
<td>2,341</td>
<td>2,346</td>
<td>0.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6139.01</td>
<td>1,363</td>
<td>1,364</td>
<td>1,354</td>
<td>-0.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6140</td>
<td>1,956</td>
<td>1,961</td>
<td>1,966</td>
<td>0.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>9,957</td>
<td>9,872</td>
<td>9,895</td>
<td>0.23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.6.2 Housing occupancy 50

The housing vacancy rate across all tracts decreased slightly from 9.8 percent in 2013 to 8.5 percent in 2014. The vacancy rate currently ranges from 3.7 percent in tract 6133 to 16.4 percent in tract 6138. Fewer homes are owner-occupied now (53 percent) than last year (61.7 percent). See Appendix C-4 for additional data.

### 3.6.3 Home values

Currently, median home values in the five census tracts around the former Fairfax Gardens neighborhood range from $242,900 to $288,800, which is lower than in 2013 ($262,000 to $299,000). 51 Census data suggest that the percentage of home values within the five tracts that fall between $200,000 and $299,000 decreased from 46 percent in 2013 to 35.7 percent in 2014. Furthermore, 29.1 percent of home values currently fall between $300,000 and $499,000, which contrasts with 28.2 percent in 2013. The median home value in Taunton continues to decline, falling from $285,200 in 2012 to $260,000 in 2014.

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

### 3.6.4 Home sales

The number of home sales across all five census tracts in 2013 ranged from 40 in tract 6140 to 125 in tract 6133, with a mean of 71. 52 Average home sales across all five tracts decreased between 2011 and 2013. See Figure 3-2 for home sales trends by Census tract between 2006 and 2013.

---

47 Source: 2005-09 ACS
48 Source: 2007-11 ACS via Community Commons
49 Source: 2008-12 ACS
50 Source: 2008-12 ACS for 2014 data; 2007-11 ACS for 2013 data
52 Source: Boxwood Means, Inc. via PolicyMap
Median sales prices rebounded between 2012 and 2013 in all tracts except for 6140, which experienced an $18,900 decrease in median price. Despite this rebound, prices are still lower than they were before the 2008 housing market crash. Tract 6134 had the highest median price in 2013 ($243,500), and tract 6140 had the lowest median price ($150,000). Figure 3-3 illustrates these trends, and additional information can be found in Appendix C-5.

53 Source: Boxwood Means, Inc via PolicyMap
3.6.5 Home lending

The number of loan originations increased from 2012 to 2013 in all five tracts, with tract 6133 leading in lending since 2006. Lending in the Fairfax Gardens neighborhood has consistently represented between 43 and 47 percent of lending in Taunton since 2006, and the 2013 figure was 46.4 percent. The proportion of loans originated for home purchases versus refinancing decreased between 2010 and 2012 in all tracts except for 6138. Figure 3-4 presents loan originations from 2006 to 2013, and additional information can be found in Appendix C-6.

![Figure 3-4. Loans originated by tract, 2006-13](image)

3.6.6 Rental Market

The FY2014 fair market rent for a three-bedroom apartment is $1,316 in the Taunton-Mansfield-Norton Metro Area. This represents an increase of $71 between 2012 and 2014. Nearly 49 percent of rents within the five Census tracts fall between $750 and $1,499. The average median rent across all tracts is currently $915 (ACS). Please see Appendix C-7 for more information.

3.7 Crime

Fairfax Gardens/Bristol Commons is designated as its own crime-reporting area by the Taunton Police Department. Crime is reported in two categories, with rates based on incidents per 1,000 persons. Part 1 crimes include murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, theft, and auto theft, and Part 2 crimes include destruction/vandalism, disorderly conduct, drug/narcotic violations, simple assault, and weapon law violations.

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54 Source: Boxwood Means, Inc via PolicyMap
55 Source: HUD Fair Market Rent Documentation System
56 Source: Taunton Police Department, November 2014
Taunton Part 1 crime rates decreased from 2009 to 2013, dropping to a low of 22.9 in 2013 from a five-year high of 27.7 in 2011. The largest change during that period was a decrease of 4.7 percent between 2011 and 2012, which coincides with the period during which Fairfax Gardens was vacated. Taunton Part 2 crime rates remained relatively stable, with 2013 again marking a five-year low (12.3 incidents per 1,000).

The Fairfax Gardens Part 1 crime rate was nearly 1.6 times the Taunton rate in 2009; it declined significantly to 0.9 times of the Taunton rate in 2010 and then rebounded to 1.6 times the Taunton rate in 2011. The Part 2 crime rate for Fairfax Gardens was nearly 3.6 times the Taunton rate in 2009. This rate dropped to 2.1 times the Taunton rate by 2011.

No Part 1 or Part 2 crimes were recorded for Fairfax Gardens/Bristol Commons in 2012 and 2013. All HOPE VI households had left Fairfax Gardens during the first half of 2012, and reconstruction took place thereafter; these factors account for this drop-off. See Figure 3-5, Figure 3-6, and Appendix C-1 for additional data.

![Figure 3-5. Part 1 Crime](image-url)
3.8 Community services and amenities

Services and amenities will still be accessed with difficulty at the Bristol Commons site, given the low Walk Score associated with that area. Services are more accessible at Lenox Green as the Walk Score for this area is higher than the Walk Score for Bristol Commons. Inventoried services and amenities include transportation, municipal government services, amenities, and civic/social organizations.

3.8.1 Transportation

Walk Scores are used to measure the walkability of an area. The Walk Score for the area around DeWert Avenue was 25 at baseline and has since declined to 19, which is described as “car dependent.”\(^{57}\) Meanwhile, the area around parcel 6A (i.e., around 79 Mason Street) received a Walk Score of 86 at baseline and has since declined to 68, which is considered “somewhat walkable.” Thus, the areas around both sites are becoming less walkable, which poses a challenge for residents moving into the new developments.

The number of people driving alone to work increased in the last year, from 89.5 percent to 92.5 percent. Public transportation is used as a means of conveyance for fewer commuters, as the rate decreased from 1.5 percent at baseline to 0.7 percent in 2014.\(^{58}\) Table 3-6 presents information regarding commuting.

\(^{57}\) Source: Walk Score (https://www.walkscore.com/)
\(^{58}\) Source: 2008-12 ACS
Table 3-6. Commute to work for Tract 6134

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communing Method</th>
<th>2013&lt;sup&gt;59&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>2014&lt;sup&gt;60&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drove Alone</td>
<td>89.5%</td>
<td>92.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpoled</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Transportation</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Means</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worked at home</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.8.2 Public services & amenities<sup>61</sup>

Distances to public services including police stations, fire stations, hospitals, Post Offices, schools, and libraries have not changed since baseline. Regarding amenities, the neighborhood around Lenox Green added a restaurant (Oak Street Café, 0.1 miles from the site) and a pharmacy (CVS, 0.3 miles from the site).

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<sup>59</sup> Source: 2007-11 ACS  
<sup>60</sup> Source: 2008-12 ACS  
<sup>61</sup> Source: Walk Score
4.0 CONCLUSION

While there is room for improvement, THA is moving toward meeting the goals of enhancing outcomes for residents with regard to housing and neighborhood quality, health, child development, and economic self-sufficiency. The impact of the HOPE VI project on the neighborhood is difficult to assess at this point in time given that the new developments were recently finished and populated with residents. It will take time in order for the full effects of the project to manifest themselves through indicator data, which itself is limited in the ability to characterize current conditions of the neighborhood.

Residents continue to report improved housing and neighborhood quality, though a majority of households continue to live in high-poverty neighborhoods. Progress in the areas of employment and income are well illustrated by the data, though many individual residents still report financial struggles despite these collective gains. Regarding resident health, there have been increases in access to medical and dental care and a decrease from baseline in the percentage of residents suffering from anxiety or fear. The capacity for resident self-sufficiency remains constrained by lack of access to childcare and transportation despite efforts from THA to address these issues. Furthermore, fewer households reported accessing partner services and resources currently as opposed to previous years. Of note, THA case managers continue to serve as important resources for residents. It is important to consider how residents will access services upon the exhaustion of HOPE VI grant funds given this pattern of resident engagement with service providers. Finding ways to foster connections between residents and partner organizations may be a useful strategy.
APPENDICES:
HOPE VI 2014
ANNUAL REPORT
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>18.0%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-24</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 and up</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey (ACS)

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

Source: 2008-12 ACS
B-2.2. Race distribution of residents, aggregate of all Census tracts

![Race distribution chart]

Source: 2008-2012 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>430</td>
<td>447</td>
<td>653</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>803</td>
<td>2981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>7685</td>
<td>3887</td>
<td>4493</td>
<td>2797</td>
<td>4500</td>
<td>23362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Pop Foreign-born</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2008-12 ACS

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>7201</td>
<td>3619</td>
<td>4277</td>
<td>2565</td>
<td>4206</td>
<td>21868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English only</td>
<td>87.7%</td>
<td>80.9%</td>
<td>73.7%</td>
<td>70.9%</td>
<td>70.5%</td>
<td>76.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language other than English</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak English less than &quot;very well&quot;</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2008-2012 ACS
B-4. Educational attainment, by Census tract

Source: 2008-2012 ACS
B-5.1.1 Median Household income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>% Change, 2013 to 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HOPE VI residents</td>
<td>$10,080$</td>
<td>$10,065$</td>
<td>$14,969.88</td>
<td>48.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Taunton</td>
<td>$53,600</td>
<td>$53,401</td>
<td>$53,631</td>
<td>0.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tract 6133</td>
<td>$85,221</td>
<td>$81,422</td>
<td>$82,284</td>
<td>1.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tract 6134</td>
<td>$66,500</td>
<td>$68,015</td>
<td>$72,071</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tract 6138</td>
<td>$25,568</td>
<td>$32,906</td>
<td>$32,513</td>
<td>-1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tract 6139</td>
<td>$41,302</td>
<td>$34,838</td>
<td>$35,412</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tract 6140</td>
<td>$35,603</td>
<td>$40,231</td>
<td>$30,786</td>
<td>-23.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B-5.1.2 Household income, aggregate of all tracts

![Pie chart showing household income distribution]

Source: 2008-2012 ACS

---

62 This amount reflects mean (average) household income, as median amount was not available.
B-5.2. Unemployment rate, all tracts

B-6.1. Poverty rate, all individuals, by Census tract
B-6.2. Poverty rate, Census tract aggregate vs. City of Taunton

Source: 2008-2012 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>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part 1 Crimes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murder</td>
<td>0</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</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</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>
</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>
</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>
</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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Part 1 Crimes</strong></td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>45.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part 2 Crimes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<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>
</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>
</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>
</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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weapon Law Violation</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Part 2 Crimes</strong></td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>55.4</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>30.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
C-2.1. Median home values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tract</th>
<th>Baseline values</th>
<th>2013 values</th>
<th>2014 Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6133</td>
<td>$309,400</td>
<td>$291,400</td>
<td>$269,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6134</td>
<td>$313,000</td>
<td>$299,600</td>
<td>$288,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6138</td>
<td>$283,000</td>
<td>$268,500</td>
<td>$272,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6139.01</td>
<td>$235,100</td>
<td>$262,000</td>
<td>$242,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6140</td>
<td>$275,500</td>
<td>$268,500</td>
<td>$258,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Taunton</td>
<td>$285,200</td>
<td>$275,100</td>
<td>$260,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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

![Pie chart showing the distribution of home values](chart)

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

Source: 2008-2012 ACS
C-3. Year of Construction

Source: 2008-2012 ACS

C-4.1. Housing vacancy

Source: 2008-2012 ACS

C-4.2. Owner-occupancy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2007-11 ACS</th>
<th>2008-2012 ACS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owner-Occupied</td>
<td>61.7%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter-Occupied</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</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>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6133</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6134</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6138</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6139.01</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6140</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Boxwood Means, Inc. via Policymap (http://www.policymap.com/)

### 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>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6133</td>
<td>$296,000</td>
<td>$254,000</td>
<td>$269,500</td>
<td>$218,268</td>
<td>$245,000</td>
<td>$215,000</td>
<td>$195,000</td>
<td>$222,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6134</td>
<td>$265,000</td>
<td>$290,000</td>
<td>$232,500</td>
<td>$205,000</td>
<td>$220,000</td>
<td>$185,000</td>
<td>$180,125</td>
<td>$243,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6138</td>
<td>$270,000</td>
<td>$260,000</td>
<td>$214,000</td>
<td>$164,000</td>
<td>$135,000</td>
<td>$188,500</td>
<td>$132,000</td>
<td>$169,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6139.01</td>
<td>$235,000</td>
<td>$240,000</td>
<td>$209,000</td>
<td>$169,000</td>
<td>$173,000</td>
<td>$180,000</td>
<td>$154,500</td>
<td>$172,950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6140</td>
<td>$257,500</td>
<td>$244,000</td>
<td>$176,906</td>
<td>$180,500</td>
<td>$175,000</td>
<td>$123,175</td>
<td>$168,900</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol County</td>
<td>$282,667</td>
<td>$270,000</td>
<td>$235,000</td>
<td>$222,900</td>
<td>$226,000</td>
<td>$210,000</td>
<td>$199,000</td>
<td>$225,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Boxwood Means, Inc. via Policymap (http://www.policymap.com/)

### 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>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6133</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>294</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6134</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>143</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6138</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6139.01</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>178</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6140</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></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>
<td>1,463</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Boxwood Means, Inc. via Policymap (http://www.policymap.com/)

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tract</th>
<th>Purchase</th>
<th>Refinance</th>
<th>Purchase</th>
<th>Refinance</th>
<th>Purchase</th>
<th>Refinance</th>
<th>Purchase</th>
<th>Refinance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6133</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
<td>75.7%</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
<td>75.8%</td>
<td>21.8%</td>
<td>78.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6134</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
<td>61.7%</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>70.3%</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
<td>83.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6138</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
<td>47.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6139.01</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
<td>55.0%</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
<td>58.6%</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
<td>70.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6140</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
<td>55.0%</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
<td>63.9%</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>73.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taunton</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
<td>68.7%</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>69.0%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Boxwood Means, Inc. via Policymap (http://www.policymap.com/)
NOTE: Boxwood Means, Inc. updates their data regularly, so results may differ from those listed in previous reports. Please note that Boxwood Means values in this report are up-to-date as of November 2014. This data was accessed through Policymap.

C-7.1. Gross rent distribution, aggregate of all tracts

![Gross rent distribution chart]

Source: 2008-2012 ACS

C-7.2. Fair market rents, City of Taunton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Size</th>
<th>FY12 FMR</th>
<th>FY13 FMR</th>
<th>FY14 FMR</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Studio</td>
<td>$659</td>
<td>$826</td>
<td>$770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Bedroom</td>
<td>$831</td>
<td>$872</td>
<td>$813</td>
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<td>2 Bedrooms</td>
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<td>$1,057</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>4 Bedrooms</td>
<td>$1,344</td>
<td>$1,515</td>
<td>$1,413</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: HUD Fair Market Rent Documentation System
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
UMass Dartmouth

To: Taunton Housing Authority
From: Colleen Dawicki
Date: 7/9/2014
Re: Focus group #2: Health & wellness

On Wednesday, June 25, 2014, the UMass Dartmouth Urban Initiative conducted its second focus group of the year, aimed at learning about residents’ health and wellness needs and services. Four HOPE VI residents participated. All participants now live off-site. This focus group discussed health and wellness services as well as residents needs and access to information in these areas: 1) healthy eating and active living (WEHL); 2) smoking cessation; and 3) mental health counseling. Throughout the session, participants were encouraged to offer ideas for engaging more residents.

1. Healthy eating & active living / WEHL

Needs of HOPE VI residents:
- Access to a gym or exercise equipment
- Transportation to get to off-site gyms
- Easier access to gym memberships, which typically require a checking account that many HOPE VI residents may not have
- More information about financial aid options at places like the YMCA

Level of information about WEHL
- The HOPE VI newsletter reaches all residents with information about WEHL and ongoing events; focus group participants felt this was sufficient for informing those already engaged
- Case managers/THA staff continue to be resources for information
- Lack of participation is viewed as personal preference, not due to lack of information or ability to access WEHL programs

What’s working
- WEHL speakers touching on good topics, engaging participants
- Diabetes education stood out as an effective module
- Farmers market viewed positively, participants like the idea, though they are not using this resource themselves

Ideas for improvement
- Work with YMCA to send out flyers/offer vouchers for residents
- Participants expressed concern about what happens to these programs at the end of the HOPE VI grant period, and suggested that THA create pathways to non-THA services and supports to ease the transition away from these resources
- Access to a nutritionist for dietary planning
2. Smoking cessation

Needs of HOPE VI residents:
- Participants were aware THA facilities are now smoke-free. This was viewed as a positive. Participants now living off-site acknowledged their own need to quit smoking.

Level of information about smoking cessation
- Residents are aware of cessation services/resources through newsletter and case managers.

Ideas for improvement
- Participants felt the current program is successful, and again noted that any lack of participation was a personal choice.

3. Mental health counseling

Needs of HOPE VI residents
- While they acknowledged the stressful environment of Fairfax Gardens, participants said once they moved off-site for construction their stress and anxiety levels were reduced.

Level of information about mental health counseling
- Participants are aware they could access counseling through their case managers.

What’s working
- While no participants have felt the need to enter counseling, one noted her use of exercise to relieve stress.

Ideas for improvement
- More education on the benefits of mental health counseling
- There appears to be a stigma among some participants about seeking this service. Perhaps there could be an information campaign with endorsements from residents who have found it helpful?

4. How to engage more residents
- Participants felt THA was engaging as much as it can. It was suggested for every topic under discussion today that if residents were not participating in the programs it was not due to any fault of THA or lack of information, but personal unwillingness.
- As noted earlier, to ensure residents leaving the auspices of THA continue to have healthy lifestyles, some connection must be forged with non-THA services before they move on.
D-2. Early childhood focus group findings

UMass Dartmouth

To: Taunton Housing Authority
From: Colleen Dawicki
Date: 7/9/2014
Re: Focus group #1: Early childhood issues

On Monday, June 23, 2014, the UMass Dartmouth Urban Initiative conducted its first of three focus groups. The purpose of this group meeting was to learn about child care and early childhood education needs of residents and hear their ideas for improving services. Two residents participated. The residents were prompted to discuss the quality and availability of child care and educational opportunities for young children (<5 yrs). Residents were also asked to assess the degree to which access to and quality of these services has changed since the renovations. The discussion focused on three areas: 1) child care in general, 2) early childhood education, and 3) plans for school-age education.

1) Child care (general)

Needs of residents:

- Currently, participants rely on off-site child care and education programs and cite transportation as the largest barrier to child care services.
- While access to HOPE VI van was noted, residents mostly rely on GATRA service, which is unchanged since last year.
- Influx of new residents means they cannot yet rely on a trusted neighbor to watch their children for a short period.
- Participants said the child care voucher system was easy to navigate.
- In general, participants feel residents are satisfied with what the new environment offers children (new playgrounds [not yet open], quieter streets, and private yard where children can play safely with lower levels supervision).

Ideas for improvement

- The participants expressed preference for an on-site program serving the neighborhood’s families through parent-child activities; such activities would not only give children things to do, but it would also help parents make connections with their peers.
- It was noted that once the HOPE VI playgrounds open, parents will hopefully have more opportunities to interact and build trusting relationships.

2) Early childhood education

Needs of residents:

- One participant was interested in enrolling children in the on-site daycare/pre-K Head Start program once it is operational.
Participants were well informed of the educational components of the program. They were unsure of their children’s eligibility, but did note that THA staff most likely had the answers for them.

- In terms of learning about and evaluating early childhood education programs and services, residents said they relied on THA staff as well as word of mouth.

Ideas for improvement:
- Information which would assure HOPE VI parents that they have preference at the on-site Head Start program.
- The lack of a social network between HOPE VI parents was touched upon again.
  - One resident noted that knowing more parents would help her to better evaluate local education options.
  - Again, it was suggested that community activities which engage parents and children (movie nights, arts and crafts, etc.) could be offered to help parents meet one another.

3) School-age education

Needs of residents:
- Older children are now seen playing outside more than before. It was noted that the new through-street encourages non-residents to use the development as a short-cut and the increased traffic and speed poses a danger to children.

Ideas for improvement:
- More speed bumps on the through-street could discourage speeding and outside use
D-3.  Workforce focus group findings

UMass Dartmouth

To:  Taunton Housing Authority
From:  Colleen Dawicki
Date:  8/1/2014
Re:  Focus group #3: Workforce development

On the evening of Tuesday, July 15, the UMass Dartmouth Urban Initiative conducted its third and final resident focus group of the year. The purpose of this session was to learn about the experiences and needs of HOPE VI residents, four of whom attended, in the area of workforce development. Topics of discussion included the Taunton Career Center, higher education, and the needs of non-native English speakers. Participants’ interest in home buying also came up, so these findings are also presented in this memo.

Career Center

Two participants had experienced the services of the Career Center, and noted that its helpfulness depended largely upon the counselor to which one is assigned. There was a sense that this is not a widely known or appreciated resource, so while HOPE VI residents were believed to stand to benefit greatly from its services—especially those related to helping people enter the job market—many do not currently avail of them. Indeed, one participant thought those services were only available through the Department of Transitional Assistance.

As in other areas of supportive service, Taunton Housing Authority case managers are the primary resource for HOPE VI residents seeking support in the area of workforce development. Participants feel that HOPE VI residents generally see their case manager as the first stop when it comes to seeking employment or job training.

Higher education

One focus group participant is currently pursuing higher education; she expressed the valuable role Bristol Community College played, particularly by helping her obtain financial aid, in her efforts to get started earning credits and then to transfer to a four-year university for a Bachelor’s degree. She shared with the other participants that BCC can also provide support earning a GED, and that some of their resources are available in Taunton (which is apparently not widely known). It does seem like there’s a role for BCC to engage HOPE VI residents first through GED programs, and then keep them engaged as undergraduates. For younger residents, it was expressed that a Taunton High School program in partnership with Stonehill College plays an important role in promoting college access.

English language learners

Language continues to serve as a major barrier to education and employment opportunities among residents who are not native English speakers. This has proven an obstacle at the career center,
which is perceived to be ill-equipped to work with Spanish-speakers, and also to obtaining jobs that require workers to be confident in their abilities to speak and read in English. One participant expressed an interest in a class that would help her improve her reading comprehension, which she felt is a more advanced need than those addressed by ESL classes. Childcare resurfaced as a need in this conversation, as it is often required so that HOPE VI residents may take ESL classes, particularly in the evening.

**Buying a home**

Focus group participants, all of whom are eager to explore this opportunity, also addressed the topic of homeownership. It was expressed that most HOPE VI residents ultimately wish to own a home, and that more information about this would be welcome. It was suggested that a workshop be offered to introduce HOPE VI residents to the things they need to think about if they’re interested in homeownership (i.e. a pre-first-time-homebuyer workshop). Participants also wanted to learn more about ways they could save for a home purchase in a way that doesn’t jeopardize their housing subsidy—basically, they described an interest in participating in the Family Self-Sufficiency program (FSS).
APPENDIX E: HOPE VI resident interview findings

E-1  Interview protocol

E-2  Interview consent form

E-3  Interview findings
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?
ADDICTION 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
2014 HOPE VI Resident Interviews

I. Introduction and methods

HOPE VI resident interviews continued to be a key component of the evaluation process. 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 expectation was to interview the same randomly selected heads of household that were interviewed for last year’s evaluation; however, three of the 25 were substituted through random identification when last year’s interviewees proved unavailable to participate. Interviews took place between March and June of 2014.

Following HUD guidelines, the Urban Initiative randomly identified 25 heads of household to be interviewed between March and June 2014. 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 interviewees continued to reflect the diversity of HOPE VI residents. Like last year, only one interviewee was male, reflecting a very high proportion of female heads of household in the target population. And while the individual participants changed, the Urban Initiative continued to conduct nineteen interviews in English and six in Spanish. Depending on the availability and preference of participants, interviews took place at either THA offices or by phone. Once again, participants were compensated for their time with a Wal-Mart gift card valued at ten dollars.

All interviews continued to be audio-recorded with verbal permission requested at the time of interview, and voluntary informed consent was obtained again 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. Question categories again 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 and summarized in a way that strives to protect the anonymity of participants.

A. Relocation process (Note: a number of interview questions previously asked about the process of leaving Fairfax Gardens in 2012, including finding an apartment, moving, and getting assistance from THA; because this was a one-time experience, these questions were not repeated
in this year’s interviews. Question numbers have been preserved to allow for comparisons to last year’s evaluation report.)

1B. Where do you live now?

Eighty-four percent (21/25) of respondents are living in Taunton, and two of these respondents moved to the newly completed HOPE VI development. All four of the respondents who do not live within Taunton live within 25 miles of the city. In 2013, eighty percent of respondents (20/25) still lived in Taunton.

1C. Have you lived anywhere else besides your present housing, since you moved from Fairfax Gardens?

Thirty six percent (9/25) of respondents report moving multiple times after leaving Fairfax Gardens. One respondent moved from a residence because it did not pass an inspection. In 2013, only one respondent noted moving multiple times.

5. Have you had any contact with the housing authority or HOPE VI program in the past year?

All 25 respondents continue to report maintaining contact with their THA case managers, and forty eight percent (12/25) specifically reported either a close or helpful relationship. For instance, two respondents received information on academic scholarships. Results were similar for the 2013 interviews.

B. Housing conditions and satisfaction

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

Sixty four percent (16/25) of respondents are happier with their current residences, citing noise level, state of repair, pest control, space, and amenities as factors. One respondent now lives in the Bristol Commons development (which replaced Fairfax Gardens) and likes it, citing space and amenities as positive attributes. Six respondents preferred their apartment at Fairfax Gardens, citing size and lack of basement as factors. Results were similar to the 2013 interviews.

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

Respondents gave a similar variety of answers as they did in 2013, noting that their heating systems functioned properly, the dwellings were larger and had more amenities, and that the area was safer and quieter than Fairfax Gardens.

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

Sixty four percent (16/25) of respondents expressed that they dislike something about their current residence. The most common complaint was lack of access to laundry facilities. Respondents also mentioned conflicts with neighbors and landlords, slow or inadequate maintenance, increasing cost, lack of basement, and general environment
(e.g., “not as easy for child to play”). In 2013, only twenty percent of respondents made negative comments about their residences.

C. Household composition

8. How many people, including you, now live in your home?

Of the twenty five respondents, three reported a five-person household, eight reported a four-person household, five reported a three-person household, six reported a two-person household, and three reported living alone. Of the twenty two multiple-member households, fourteen could be identified as led by a single parent or guardian and two were led by a married couple.

9. Has this changed?

Eighty percent (20/25) of respondents report no change in household numbers or composition. Three reported additions to their households: in one, a partner and newborn; in another household, a husband and newborn; in a third, a grandson.

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

Two respondents each reported that a child no longer lives with them.

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?

Out of twenty five respondents, five identified themselves as living in the same neighborhood as Fairfax Gardens, an increase of three since 2013.

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

These responses were similar to those of 2013, with most respondents comparing their new areas favorably. Common themes were again that their new neighborhoods were quieter, walkable, safer, more relaxed, and had better shopping opportunities than Fairfax Gardens. One respondent moved into Bristol Commons, and they called the new complex “more desirable living.” Of the four others living in the same neighborhood as the former Fairfax Gardens, new benefits included increased walkability, lower population density, improved safety, and improved maintenance.

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

Overall, respondents liked that their neighborhoods quiet, safe, and walkable. One respondent moved into Bristol Commons, and they liked the increased family privacy and decreased population density.
12C. Is there anything about the neighborhood that you do not like?

Sixty percent (15/25) of respondents did not mention any dislikes. Respondents who did note dislikes mentioned problems and a lack of connection with neighbors, a less hospitable environment for children (e.g., busy streets), and other neighborhood characteristics (e.g., burned out building, parking). Only two respondents noted that they did not like their neighborhoods in the 2013 interviews.

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

Eighty four percent (21/25) of respondents reported that their neighborhoods were convenient. Walkability to stores, bus stops, and medical services was often cited. For the four respondents who reported that their neighborhood was not convenient, two cited transportation issues and two cited availability of desired businesses. Only one respondent in 2013 noted that their neighborhood was not convenient.

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

Fourteen respondents indicated that their new neighborhood is more convenient. Four respondents said that their new neighborhood is less convenient, and six said that the two were about the same. One respondent did not provide an answer. Results from 2013 were similar.

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

Sixty eight percent (17/25) of respondents indicated that their shopping habits changed. Seven respondents did not change their shopping habits, and one mentioned a school but did not mention whether or not the school changed. In 2013, eleven respondents noted that they made significant changes in shopping habits.

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

Seventy two percent (18/25) of respondents felt safer than they did while living at Fairfax Gardens. Six respondents said they felt as safe as they did at Fairfax Gardens, and one felt safer at Fairfax Gardens. In 2013, fifteen respondents felt safer and eight felt “about the same.”

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

Those respondents who felt safer noted the absence of drugs, crime, and gunshots. They also mentioned “better neighbors” and increased security of the dwelling.

E. Family and friendship relationships (Note: these questions referred to relationships in the context of moving from Fairfax Gardens and were thus excluded from this year’s interviews.)
F. Neighborhood characteristics

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

Sixty percent (15/25) of respondents talk with neighbors at varying levels of frequency, and ten respondents do not speak with their neighbors. Two of those who speak with neighbors only speak to one neighbor, and one speaks to all neighbors, whether or not they are perceived as bad, in order to get a “read” on them. In 2013, more respondents (eighty four percent) spoke with neighbors at some level of frequency.

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

Forty percent (10/25) of respondents noted that their behavior had not changed. Of the ten respondents who do not speak with their new neighbors, half said that this was a change; of the fifteen respondents who do speak to their new neighbors, three speak with neighbors less than before, and four speak with neighbors more now.

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

Sixty percent (15/25) of respondents do not socialize with neighbors. Of the ten respondents who socialize with their neighbors, the interactions of five seem to center around their children (e.g., playdates). Results from 2013 were similar.

19B. About how often do you do this?

Three respondents socialize once a month or less, two socialize a couple of times a month, and three socialize regularly.

19C. Why/why not?

Among the ten respondents who do not socialize with neighbors, reasons included being busy (two said this), the lack of group get-togethers, having little interest (four gave this response), and a language barrier.

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

Forty four percent (11/25) of respondents indicated that they socialized more at Fairfax Gardens. Seven respondents socialize more now and five noted no change. The interviewee who recently moved to Bristol Commons was not sure how the layout of the property would affect socialization.

20B. Why do you think this has changed?

Of the respondents that noted a change, four mentioned choosing not to connect, six mentioned a change in the number of friends (five have more now and one has fewer), two mentioned attitudes toward current neighbors (one liked them and one did not), one mentioned a language barrier, three mentioned neighborhood characteristics (i.e., less
public space and increased safety), one mentioned joining a club, and one had not been at their current residence long enough to make a judgment.

G. Employment and income

22. Are you now employed, or unemployed?
Fifty six percent (14/25) of respondents were employed, while ten were unemployed. One respondent was on maternity leave from their employer. Twelve respondents were employed in 2013.

23A. Has that changed?
Seventy two percent (18/25) of respondents had no change in employment status. Of the respondents that had a change in employment status, five gave specific reasons for leaving their jobs: one reported, “actually losing money working,” one left because of the schedule, one left due to family issues, one is starting a business, and one is on maternity leave.

24A. If employed: What is your job, and how long have you been working there?
Ten respondents were unemployed and thus did not answer the question. Of the respondents who provided information about their employer, four worked in food service, three worked as assistants (two in healthcare, one in transportation), three worked in retail, one worked as a hotel housekeeper, and two worked at youth centers. Of the respondents who provided information about tenure, seven had been at their present job for three years or less, and five have been at their present job for more than three years. In 2013, nine of twelve employed respondents held their jobs for three years or less, and the sector with the largest representation among employed respondents was healthcare (5/12).

24B. If employed: What do you like about your job?
Ten respondents were unemployed and thus did not answer the question, and one respondent had just started their job and noted that it was too soon to answer this question. Five residents were ambivalent toward their jobs, including one who specifically mentioned that, “…there’s no future to it.” Of the nine respondents that made positive comments about their jobs, three respondents indicated that they like the flexible schedule, five enjoy interactions with co-workers and clients, and one enjoyed opportunities to be creative.

24C. If employed: What do you dislike about your job?
Eleven respondents described a number of dislikes. These included low pay, inadequate staffing, negative interactions with co-workers, deteriorating condition of patients, long commute, changes in management, rude customers, no opportunity for advancement, and frequent inspections by corporate entities. The most important theme to emerge was a dislike of interactions with co-workers and clients (five respondents).
24D. Are you employed full-time or part-time?

Ten were part-time employees, and four are full-time employees. Finally, one respondent is working thirty hours per week because they are caring for a loved one. In 2013, nine out of twelve employed respondents were employed on a part-time basis, two were full-time employees, and one worked a seasonal job.

24E. How did you find your job?

Nine respondents found their job through a personal contact. One of these individuals was a former client of their employer and another moved from volunteer to employee status. Six respondents applied for their jobs directly via applications. In 2013, half of employed respondents found their job through a personal contact.

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

Of the ten unemployed respondents, four were unemployed due to disability or illness, three had trouble working and taking care of their children simultaneously, one had trouble finding a job because of their age, one cited education and language barriers, and the client of one respondent passed away. Responses from the 2013 interviews were varied and included childcare and transportation issues.

26. Has moving affected your employment in any way?

Sixteen respondents said that the move did not affect their employment, and three noted that this question was not applicable (N/A). One respondent mentioned the burden of finding transportation since moving, and one was able to access a car after the move, but the car broke down since then. One respondent had a shorter commute after the move and another was able to access a job opportunity at a relative’s factory after the move.

H. Material hardship

27A. 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?

Sixty-four percent (16/25) of respondents reported that at times they had not been able to pay bills, two of whom were experiencing ongoing difficulty at the time of the interview. One participant noted, “Rent comes first. Sometimes other bills have to wait a little.” Thirty six percent (9/25) reported that they had not experienced this hardship.

27B. How often has this happened?

Five respondents noted continuous difficulty with paying bills, six had occasional (e.g., twice a year) difficulty paying bills, one specifically mentioned experiencing trouble paying bills in the winter, one mentioned having difficulty one time, and two mentioned currently experiencing difficulties paying bills. There was an increase in the number of respondents from 2013 to 2014 (from two to five) who had continuous trouble with paying bills.
27C. What did you do?

Strategies varied: two respondents mentioned better budgeting, one adjusted spending, two asked THA for help, one took an extra job, one went to a job fair, one was given cash assistance, two mentioned strategically paying priority bills first (i.e., rent first), and one went on a payment plan for a utility bill.

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

Fourteen respondents said that their experience was different, nine said that their experience had not changed, and one person did not answer the question. Another respondent described how THA helped them financially as they transitioned into Bristol Commons. Of the respondents who said their experience was different, three mentioned experiencing more difficulty at Fairfax Gardens, one felt that things became more difficult after leaving Fairfax Gardens, and the rest did not provide context. Fewer individuals provided context in the current survey than in the 2013 survey.

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

Of those who answered the previous question affirmatively, three respondents are now coping with increased utility costs or higher rent, one simply mentioned having more money before moving, two mentioned a reduction in public benefits, three experienced changes in employment status, and one moved further from family. One respondent experienced financial difficulty following a change in relationship status, and they noted that the THA helped them and was “wonderful.” During the 2013 interviews, four respondents ascribed the difference to costs associated with a one-time crisis, and two respondents ascribed the difference to a change in employment status.

28A. 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?

Forty eight percent (12/25) said that they had experienced times when they could not buy enough food, while twelve said that they had not experienced this problem. One respondent indicated that they are just barely able to buy enough food. This is an increase from 2013, when one-third of respondents said that they had experienced times when they could not buy enough food.

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

Of the twelve respondents who experienced difficulty affording food, three noted occasional difficulty, three experienced difficulty often, one experienced this monthly, two experienced this a few times during the year, one reported experiencing trouble one significant time, and one mentioned experiencing trouble “recently.” The participant who stated that they are barely able to afford food noted that this is a continuing struggle. In 2013, 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?
Of the twelve respondents who experienced difficulty affording food, two noted receiving help from family, six received food stamps, two used budgeting to address their difficulty, one mentioned eating less healthy food, and one noted that they would have to make do until their food stamp support resumes. Three respondents who did not have difficulty affording food noted that this is because they receive food stamps. Furthermore, the participant who stated that they are barely able to afford food noted that their food stamp benefit was cut as their income increased, meaning that their situation remained effectively unchanged.

28D. Is this different from when you lived at Fairfax Gardens?

Of the twelve respondents who have experienced times when they could not buy enough food, nine (seventy five percent) said that their situation is more difficult now, two said that their situation had not changed since moving from Fairfax Gardens, and one did not provide an answer to this question. In 2013, the same percentage (seventy five) said their experience was more difficult after leaving Fairfax Gardens.

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

The majority of the reasons given were related to change in employment, worsening financial situations, or the reduction of public benefits. Of the twelve respondents who have experienced times when they could not buy enough food, four mentioned changes in employment through either loss of work (three) or job stability (one), two mentioned having more money at Fairfax Gardens (one specifically mentioned having fewer bills), one mentioned a decrease in the amount of their food stamp benefit, one mentioned receiving more help from neighbors at Fairfax Gardens, and one noted that “Section 8 changes too much.”

I. Housing and health

30A. Has there been any change in your health, or any of your family members’ health, in the last year?

Of twenty five respondents, eleven did not experience a change. Ten respondents noted a change: 6 reported negative changes (e.g., worsening condition), and four reported improving health. Four answers described conditions but did not underscore a change. In 2013, five reported positive changes, while three noted changes for the worse.

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

Of the ten respondents who reported changes in health, three mentioned losing ties to friends/family, one mentioned their neighborhood as a factor, one mentioned reduced exercise due to school commitments as a factor. Reasons for positive change included getting treatment, pinpointing the cause of a condition, and moving to better housing.

31A. Has your stress level changed since your move in the last year?
Fourteen respondents noted a change in stress level: eight were experiencing increased stress, four experienced a decrease in stress, and two did not specify the direction of the change. In 2013, 14 reported that their stress levels had changed for the better, sometimes dramatically, since leaving Fairfax Gardens. Six reported that stress had increased.

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

Noteworthy reasons for increased stress included the disruption of moving, child-related concerns (four responded in this way), transportation challenges (2), loneliness, and depression. Reasons for reduced stress included feeling like a child is safer upon moving to Bristol Commons, living in a more relaxed environment, and the positive impact of a child.

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

Just four interviewees reported missing school or work due to a health concern, which is the same result as 2013.

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

Of the four respondents who missed work or school, two did not experience any problems, one experienced “some” problems, and one did not provide an answer.

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

Five reported that their children did miss school due to health concerns; down from nine in 2013.

34B. If yes, why do you think that has happened?

Of the respondents that reported absences, one was related to asthma, one was related to autism, one was related to meningitis, one was not ascribed to a particular issue, and one was due to “normal childhood illness.” In the latter case, the parent noted that a pattern of illnesses experienced at Fairfax Gardens had ended for their child.

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

Seven respondents noted that health problems have affected their child’s learning or behavior in school. In 2013, six respondents noted that health problems had affected their child’s performance in school.

34D. If yes, describe.

Of the affirmative responses to 34C, one child has ADD/ADHD, one was being evaluated for ADHD, one acts out, two have autism, one has depression, and one has a learning disability.
34E. Why do you think that has happened?

Three respondents noted that their conditions are ongoing problems, and one noted family issues as the cause of their child’s depression.

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. Two respondents had children attending local colleges.

35B. Is it located nearby?

Twelve respondents explicitly stated that their children attend schools that are nearby, and seven explicitly stated that their children attend schools that are not nearby. Three respondents did not give information related to the proximity of their child’s school, and three respondents noted that the question was not applicable. Mode of transit varies, with some children taking a school bus and some walking with or receiving rides from parents. The children of two respondents commute to local colleges. In 2013, most children were enrolled in schools located near their homes, and they typically walked to school, were driven by a parent, or were transported by public school bus or van.

35C. How was the school selected?

Five respondents chose a school based on either the services that the school provided, one sought out the specific school district, and one mentioned the existence of choice without mentioning why a choice was made. Otherwise, no special choices were made. This represents an increase in planning from 2013, when just three respondents indicated that they evaluated either the school or the entire district for fit.

36A. Is this a different school from the school your child attended last year?

Eleven respondents indicated that their children are attending a different school, and one respondent had one child in the same school and one in a different school. Three of the respondents noted changes and gave specific reasons. Two cases were due to natural progression through the educational system and one was due to a specific choice based on location. In 2013, most of the children who remained in Taunton were 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 fourteen responses, ten respondents indicated that the change was due to regular advancement and relocation was cited three times. One respondent noted that their children changed schools in order to address their specific needs. In 2013, regular advancement was cited eleven times and relocation six times. Furthermore, 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. Three respondents noted that the new schools are better able to address the interests and needs of their children, and one respondent noted that the child had social issues at their prior school. In 2013, three respondents noted that the new schools were better able to address the needs of their children, and two respondents noted that their children no longer needed special language assistance.

37. **How is your child doing in school?**

Respondents referenced twenty-nine children, and seventeen were described as doing well in school, with one child being taken off their Individualized Education Program (IEP) because of their progress. Six children earned average grades in school, three had mixed performance (e.g., good grades with behavioral issues), and three had specific problems at school. Of the three children with noted difficulties, one had trouble communicating with other students, one had a dispute with another student, and one had anger management difficulty. In 2013, respondents referenced thirty-two children, and twenty-five were described as doing well in school, four were described as doing poorly, and three were given mixed assessments.

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

Eleven respondents specifically noted that their child’s schooling was not affected by the move. Four respondents noted that the move had positive effects on schooling. These positive effects included better staff and more opportunities for socialization. Two respondents noted negative effects of the move on schooling. One had difficulty leaving friends and one “lost the urge to want success.” One respondent said the effects of the move were “normal,” and the responses of two participants were vague (i.e., “maybe,” “probably not now”). For 2013, no perceived pattern emerged from the data; instead, for every child who disliked their new school, there was another child (sometimes in the same family) who was 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.?**

Out of nineteen responses, four participants indicated that their children do not participate in programs either before or after school, and fifteen indicated that their children do participate in these programs. Children participate in a variety of programs, including sports, Boys and Girls Club, tutoring, and counseling. In 2013, eight interviewees’ children did not participate in extracurricular activities and nineteen did participate.

39B. **Is this new for your child since your move in the last year?**

Eight respondents indicated that this was not new since last year, and six said that this situation was new since last year. In 2013, twelve respondents noted no change, and seven respondents noted a change.
40A. Since your move, has there been any change in your child’s behavior in school?

Six respondents said there had been a change. In 2013, only one respondent indicated a change in their child’s behavior from 2012.

40B. If yes, please describe.

Two noted positive changes and ascribed them to individualized attention and behavioral improvements. Of the four respondents who noted negative changes, one noted family troubles, two noted trouble paying attention, and one noted behavioral issues.

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

For the two respondents who noted positive changes in behavior, one ascribed the change to counseling and the other noted specialized attention and work. For the four respondents who noted negative changes in behavior, one noted a disagreement with another child at school, one noted the child’s desire to return to Fairfax Gardens, one did not provide an answer, and one did not know the reason for the change. In 2013, changes were generally ascribed to transitioning to a new school environment.

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

Twenty-one respondents provided an answer: four participants stated that they are not involved with the school and seventeen said they are involved. One respondent noted they are not involved due to distance from the school. Of those who are involved, most attend meetings and events at the school, and two respondents noted that there is not as much connection with teachers as they would like. This represents an increase from 2013, when ten reported some involvement.

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

Twenty-one respondents provided an answer, out of which thirteen said that their child or children asked for help with homework, while eight said that they did not.

42B. Do you look over your child’s schoolwork?

Eighteen respondents provided an answer, out of which fifteen said that they look over their child’s homework and six say they do not.

K. Outlook for redevelopment and the future

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

The percentage of respondents who said they would not like to return to the new HOPE VI development increased from thirty-two percent (8/25) in 2013 to eighty percent (20/25) in 2014. Also in the 2014 survey, two respondents said they would like to return, two already moved in to the new HOPE VI development, and one was not sure.

43B. Why or why not?
Of the respondents who moved to the new HOPE VI development, one preferred the location and conditions and one answered “not applicable.” Of the respondents who would like to move to the new development, one was concerned that their child could not return to their current residence and one cited “business considerations.” Eleven respondents did not want to return to the new development because they feared losing Section 8, which they said granted freedom and mobility. Of the other respondents who did not want to return to the new development, two noted the risk of safety concerns, five are happy with their current living arrangements, one mentioned moving too much recently, and one mentioned their bad experience at Fairfax Gardens. In 2013, loss of Section 8 voucher and development of safety concerns were major reasons for either not wanting to return to the new development or feeling ambivalent about doing so.

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

Of the two respondents who clearly stated that they wished to return to the HOPE VI housing, one had no preference and one said they could only return to the site near the bus station.

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

In no particular order, respondents would like to attain the following:

- A college degree
- Employment or a promotion
- Financial stability
- Home ownership
- Improved health
- Relocation
- Self-sufficiency
- Travel

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

Of 25 respondents, eighteen had no further comments. Seven respondents made final statements, summarized below in no particular order:

- THA case managers are very helpful and have a lot of experience
- Case manager is wonderful and keeps up with her intensively
- Respondent was afraid that they lost the chance to move to the new HOPE VI development because of a situation with their adult child
- Respondent’s adult child is homeless, but he cannot move in with them due to Section 8 restrictions
- Some people do not realize that the aid that the Department of Transitional Assistance provides is meant to be temporary
- THA does not help with per-bag trash expenses, and a trash deduction for larger families is needed
- One respondent noted other reasons not to return to the new development
  - Mixed message about pets
○ Seeing people return that they thought were causing trouble at Fairfax Gardens

**IV. Conclusion**

Taunton Housing Authority case managers continue to be important resources for residents, with most respondents reporting either a close or helpful relationship. These relationships are especially important given that there was an increase from last year in the number of respondents who moved multiple times, and moving can be costly and disruptive.

Despite multiple moves, most respondents continue to report greater satisfaction with their new neighborhoods than with Fairfax Gardens because they are quieter, safer, and more relaxed. Most respondents continue to describe their current residences as superior to their dwelling at Fairfax Gardens due to improved noise level, state of repair, pest control, living space, and amenities. At the same time, some of the positive effects of the initial move seem to be wearing off: interviewees are reporting growing dissatisfaction with their current living situations, and they are socializing less than they reported last year. Employment gains were reported by more interviewees, more of whom are working and doing so full-time. Nevertheless, respondents continue to struggle financially. For some, this is because employment gains have triggered benefit losses. Interviewees reported little change since last year in the areas of health, well-being, and the status of their children.

The Urban Initiative will revisit these issues through follow-up interviews with the same 25 individuals in the spring of 2015.