

**Annual Report on Poverty Reduction
and
Community Wealth Building Initiatives
in the City of Richmond, Virginia**

**Transmitted to City Council and
The Maggie L. Walker Citizens Advisory Board**

by

Mayor Levar M. Stoney

February 27, 2017

Preface from Mayor Levar Stoney

Ordinance 2015-240 requires the Mayor of Richmond to file an annual report to City Council and make a presentation at a Council meeting prior to March 1st each year providing an update on the City's progress in the implementation of the comprehensive poverty reduction strategy. The report must include evaluative metrics that are as consistent as possible from year to year, and must provide an account of the major activities of the Office of Community Wealth Building. By ordinance, the report also must carry the signature of the Mayor.

I am pleased to hereby transmit this report to City Council and the Maggie L. Walker Citizens Advisory Board. The attached document provides an update on the strategy and action plan, which is being led by the Office of Community Wealth Building.

Introduction and Background

After years of analysis and debate, Richmond is taking bold and innovative steps to improve life conditions for thousands of Richmond citizens, as evidenced by the creation of an office within City government tasked with leading a citywide poverty reduction effort. The foundational documents that memorialize the research, analysis, metrics and community input that has shaped the current Community Wealth Building strategy can be found in the Mayor's Anti-Poverty Commission Report (January 18, 2013), the Annual Report on Poverty Reduction and Community Wealth Building Initiative in the City of Richmond (February 22, 2016) and the Office of Community Wealth Building Year One Annual Report (April 2016). The aforementioned documents are available for review through the Office of Community Wealth Building. The staff in the Office of Community Wealth Building takes responsibility for advancing the recommendations from the Anti-Poverty Commission as articulated in the Year One Annual Report (April 2016).

The updates to the targets and metrics from the 2016 Annual Report are included in the Appendix.

Here are the major accomplishments or observations since last year's annual report to Council and to the Citizens Advisory Board:

Clarity, Action Steps and Challenges

During the course of this year, the Office of Community Wealth Building recognized inconsistency in the way some stakeholder and community partners described the target population served by their respective organizations. In order to confirm their community-wide leadership role of the Office of Community Wealth Building and to encourage shared terminology and categorization, the Office hosted a Virtual Town Hall Meeting on September 22, 2017. The Office promoted the Virtual Town Hall by way of various social media platforms. According to the analytics after the event, 250 individuals registered to participate in the event. Some participants hosted "Listening Parties" in their place of

employment or at their school. The event could also be viewed at all of the public libraries. Therefore, the successful event reached hundreds of Richmond residents.

Participants in the Town Hall were asked to submit a survey indicating their area of interest or expertise. The staff used the survey results to create a distribution list to invite the participants to convene for follow-up conversations. Those conversations began in October and are ongoing. The goal is to complete the follow-up network meetings by the end of March 2017. At that point, a significant percentage of providers, agencies, ministries and the general public will have heard the shared vision and had the opportunity to align their perspective to the Self Sufficiency Framework.

The fundamental aim of the Office of Community Wealth Building is policy and structural change. Our community of providers need to work in concert to build a coherent ladder out of poverty through access to quality employment and related supports, bolstering the community and economic assets of low income neighborhoods, and creating stronger neighborhoods and educational opportunities to improve the life chances of Richmond’s low income children.

The goal is to alleviate systemic and structural barriers so that 1000 citizens each year are able to move to a thriving level of economic stability. The best way to organize the movement of these individuals (head of households) toward upward mobility is to have a uniform and shared framework.

In Crisis	At Risk	Safe	Stable	Thriving
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Income or assets • No skills or credentials • Homeless or unstable housing • No or unreliable transportation or child care. • Safety and mental health risks are high • Addictions and/or Legal Problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking job or temp/seasonal job or other legal income • Temporary or transitional housing • Transportation and child care available, but not affordable or reliable • Seeking GED or vocational training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employed in semi-stable job • Housing is stable and is affordable (maybe with subsidy) • Transportation and child care are generally reliable and affordable • Has high school diploma, GED, or vocational training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent & stable job paying living wage • Housing is stable & and is affordable without subsidy • Transportation and child care are reliable and affordable • Career & educational plan in place; active & ongoing learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent, stable employment sufficient to build assets • Housing is permanent & affordable without subsidy • Transportation and child care are reliable and affordable • Education and career plan being implemented

Employment and Job Creation Strategies

Two of the Tier One Recommendations for Action in the Anti-Poverty Commission report were: 1.) expand the existing workforce pipeline program, and 2.) begin identifying and recruiting/ supporting employers capable of and interested in employing significant numbers of low income Richmond residents. We made important progress this year.

The **Center for Workforce Innovation (CWI)** at 900 East Marshall is the workforce pipeline program of the Office of Community Wealth Building. CWI continued its mission of connecting residents to employment opportunities and providing a variety of training programs to participants. The employment goal for CWI is to help participants find work in an occupation or career that is in demand and pays a wage sufficient to enable the participant to transition off of social supports. CWI measures its performance by documenting the number of individuals participating in services, the number of individuals hired into employment, the number of unique employers hiring individuals through OCWB activities, and average starting wage.

Participants in CWI must complete an initial orientation session and an initial “contract” to enroll in the program. Once enrolled, participants receive detailed case management based upon an assessment of the participant’s situation and specific employment and career goals. Participants then may be referred to a training program operated by CWI, such as the Workforce Professionals course, or by another public or private provider. The focus of CWI’s training programs are based on an analysis of the local labor market to identify sectors in which there is high demand, relatively short training time, and the possibility of entry-level employees building an upwardly mobile career path. Participants may also receive assistance with services such as transportation to job interviews, obtaining appropriate job-related clothing, mock interviews, and related services. CWI staff continue to work with actively engaged participants until the goal of obtaining employment is reached, and also provide support to participants after they are on the job.

Last fiscal year (fiscal year 2016), 390 unemployed and underemployed individuals were enrolled in career coaching and training services. CWI assisted 212 participants gain employment with an average wage of \$9.95 per hour. CWI had an 81% success rate. Most importantly, CWI was able to assist 75 individuals with sustaining themselves above the poverty line. CWI is trending to have similar results this fiscal year. CWI currently has six full-time staff positions within the Office of Community Wealth Building and also utilizes two employees of the Department of Social Services who are on long-term loan to the unit. CWI also uses contract employees to provide instructional, administrative, and security services.

The economic impact on the City and region is inarguable. The citizens who achieved

success in the CWI program were primarily heads of households. Therefore, 212 people added more revenue to the tax base, supported their obligations with their children, purchased their own goods and services and felt a renewed sense of dignity.

Approximately 15,600 people visited CWI last year. With the current level of staff capacity they were only able to provide intensive support to 390 citizens. The need is great. Richmond has thousands of people who on their own volition find their way to CWI, hoping to find a pathway to a better paying job or career. The Office of Community Wealth Building has estimated that more than 20,000 adults in Richmond could benefit from CWI's unique, intensive approach to self-sufficiency through quality employment, if CWI were able to dramatically expand its capacity.

The Center for Workforce Innovation has established several innovative partnerships with local businesses to enhance employment opportunities and services for participants. Those businesses include Luck Stone, the Dog Wagon, GRTC, Admiral Security, Lowes, Richmond Public Schools, the City of Richmond, VCU, Advance Auto Parts, Altria, Greenfield Senior Living and Hunter Holmes McGuire VA Medical Center.

During the course of this year, the Office of Community Wealth Building, working with the Department of Economic and Community Development, was able to attract two major employers to downtown Richmond with jobs that pay salaries of \$30,000 and up. This was the ultimate success. Jobs that are accessible on public transportation, within companies that have career potential and were attracted to the mission and goals of the Office of Community Wealth Building and the professionalism of CWI. CoStar will bring 700 jobs to Richmond. Owens and Minor is adding 300 new jobs to its workforce that will be based in downtown Richmond. Both companies are working with CWI on training programs that will ensure the success of individuals who are hired by the company as a result of their participation in CWI. Not only will these jobs be life altering for the CWI participants who are hired, but other downtown businesses and City finances will benefit from the major corporations selecting to locate their operation in Richmond.

Another central recommendation from the Commission was to build upon the City's emerging workforce efforts by devoting targeted resources to address common barriers to employment such as inadequate transportation and access to child care, and by adopting a holistic approach to service delivery focusing on the *family unit* as a whole. To fulfill this recommendation, **BLISS—Building Lives to Independence and Self-Sufficiency**—was launched as a pilot in 2015 within CWI to provide employment support and wrap-around support services to low-income families in Richmond. The goal of the program is to help families achieve long-term economic self-sufficiency. The program assesses and tracks the well-being of participating households across eighteen domains including housing, employment, income, food, child care, children's education, adult education, health care, life skills, family social relations, access to mobility (transportation), community involvement, parenting skills, legal status, disability status, mental health, substance abuse, and safety. The participants in the program are selected from Richmond Redevelopment & Housing Authority properties or RRHA

voucher recipients. The families are diverse with respect to family structure, nation of origin, native language, age of head of household, and past employment experience.

BLISS case managers work to build relationships of trust with participating families, so that obstacles and barriers can be openly discussed and approached from a problem-solving perspective. Services provided to BLISS participants include:

- Development of a long-term, household-specific plan for moving towards self-sufficiency and thriving, based on initial interviews as well as home visits and frequent follow-up
- Enrollment in GED classes (registration, books and supplies)
- Enrollment in ESL classes (registration, books and supplies)
- Referrals to advanced training classes including welding, forklift, medical coding (registration for exam and test prep materials)
- Transportation for work-related purposes via GRTC, bicycles, and vehicle repair services
- Placement in high quality child care via VCU Health Systems
- Enrollment in Head Start and the Virginia Preschool Initiative
- Referrals for short-term employment and long-term secure employment

Currently the head of household is working in 18 of 19 families. As of January 31, 2017:

- 19 families (71 people total) participate in the BLISS program
- 94% of BLISS families are employed (18 out of 19 families)
- 94% have made strides toward the goal of moving to “Thriving” by obtaining employment and pursuing education

The BLISS staff is based at 203 E. Cary Street, the location of the federally-funded Resource Workforce Center. Co-location with the Resource Workforce Center provides additional meeting space for meetings with participants and facilitates a stronger relationship with the Resource Workforce Center.

This year the BLISS holistic methodology was adapted and applied to the Gilpin Court Early Childhood Pilot Program. The case manager for this program focuses on residents in Gilpin with young children and tries to personally engage them in a process of moving towards long-term self-sufficiency, using a holistic approach.

Another area that could lead to hundreds of job and career opportunities for CWI participants is the expansion of the businesses which will complement the **Richmond Marine Terminal (Port of Richmond)**. It is anticipated that the long-term arrangement at the Port will facilitate infrastructure investment and job creation in the Marine Terminal and surrounding area over the next decade and beyond. The Director of the Office of Community Wealth Building is the chair of the Subcommittee of the Greater Richmond Chamber of Commerce tasked with developing a workforce pipeline to fill jobs created at or near the Richmond Marine Terminal in coming years.

Democracy Collaborative, a nationally known consulting firm produced a report and work plan for the City in July 2016 that outlined viable **social enterprises** that could employ at least 50

residents at living wages of \$15.00/hour within 36 months. The report from Democracy Collaborative incorporated the perspective and analysis of more than 100 business and nonprofit representatives in the region. The final report is available through the Office of Community Wealth Building. The three business ideas are Richmond Community Construction (a construction finishing and framing service for anchor institutions or RRHA); Richmond Community and Property Management Cooperative (a business that would clean, prep and repair housing units to get them ready for the next tenants); and Richmond Community Health (a community health worker business that would provide support to discharged patients in their homes). The Social Enterprise Specialist is currently exploring the viability of these business ideas in accordance with the work plan created by Democracy Collaborative.

The Conrad Center for Culinary Training launched this year as part of the social enterprise work of the Office of Community Wealth Building. As a result of the screening process at CWI, six (6) individuals were able to enroll in the inaugural culinary training program at the Conrad Center in October 2016. During the training program the students were exposed to several leading restaurant owners and chefs in Richmond, with the expectation that they would be able to work with them at some point in the future. All of the students were able to secure jobs in the food industry at the conclusion of the training program. Currently, the Office of Community Wealth Building is in conversation with J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College to see how the City and J. Sargeant Reynolds can collaborate on complementary programs, since J. Sargeant Reynolds is poised to open a culinary training program in the East End within the next several months.

Social Enterprise development will remain a strong component of the Office of Community Wealth Building strategy. For some citizens with backgrounds that might limit their work options, the ability for CWI to have an alternative option for participants to leverage their own talents and start their own business is critical. Social enterprise training is in development with the Office of Minority Business Development that will educate them on the basic mechanics of operating a sustainable business.

Finally, the **Mayor's Youth Academy** (MYA) moved to the Office of Community Wealth Building in January 2017. The Mayor's Youth Academy is now a program under CWI. The program is a multifaceted effort to not only connect Richmond teenagers to summer employment, but also provide year-round support and a variety of activities aimed at promoting career and life readiness. The MYA provides development opportunities to youth throughout the City of Richmond such as job readiness training, leadership development, exposure to entrepreneurship, mentoring, and post-secondary career exploration. The goal is to develop Richmond's future workforce into determined, successful citizens who will one day become our City's leaders. The CWI staff is currently in the process of hiring a manager for the program.

EDUCATION STRATEGIES

Another Top Tier recommendation of the Anti-Poverty Commission was to strengthen the PreK-12 educational pipeline. The goal is to develop of a comprehensive educational pipeline to support the success of children in poverty and help improve outcomes in the school system as a whole. Four areas have been identified, each of which is of critical importance:

- Early Childhood Education
- Out-of-School Time for adolescents
- Connecting high school graduates to career and college opportunities
- Providing support services to students and families in poverty

During the course of this year, the OCWB maintained the approach of providing support to providers, partners and stakeholders who had primary responsibility for programs and initiatives that would help advance the areas of critical importance.

- The Richmond Early Childhood Cabinet. The Cabinet, based loosely on the Children’s Cabinet established in 2014 by Governor Terry McAuliffe at the statewide level, is a monthly gathering of key program managers and decision makers impacting early childhood in both the City of Richmond and Richmond Public Schools. Participants include directors or representatives from Social Services, the Early Childhood Development Initiative, Richmond Public Library, the Office of the Deputy CAO for Human Services and Office of Community Wealth Building on the City side, and Head Start, Virginia Preschool Initiative, and the Director of Curriculum & Instruction on the RPS sides. This team meets monthly to share information and identify opportunities for collaboration, as well as help develop a strategic “Road Map to Kindergarten” for improving early childhood education in Richmond. The Cabinet began meeting in April 2015.

- The Richmond Early Childhood Action Council. The Early Childhood Action Council includes the City of Richmond and Richmond Public Schools (administration and school board), but also many key community providers and funders of early childhood education. Participating organizations include Childsavers, Family Lifeline, Friends Association for Children, the YWCA, Robins Foundation, the United Way, and others. The Council meets semi-monthly; six work teams have been formed to address key issues, all culminating in the development of a comprehensive strategic framework for addressing and meeting early childhood needs in Richmond.

- The City of Richmond was awarded a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation in 2015 to build upon our collaborative early childhood work. These funds are being used to staff the work of the Richmond Early Childhood Cabinet and Action Council and lead completion of a comprehensive assessment and strategic plan for Early Childhood needs; to conduct extensive community outreach concerning early childhood education in proximity to each of Richmond’s public housing communities; and to launch a pilot family engagement program in Gilpin Court, in collaboration with the Friends Association for Children and Partnership for Families. This grant funding is also being used to conduct community engagement activities and in-depth surveys on issues facing families of young children with low-income residents citywide. The Comprehensive Assessment and Strategic Plan was completed this year and is currently being used to inform the City of Richmond/Richmond Public Schools Education Compact.

- RVA Reads. The RVA Reads program is a collaboration between Richmond Public

Library, Richmond Public Schools, and the Office of Community Wealth Building. The program involves monthly readings by parents and volunteers in the City's preschool centers of children's books, and distribution of books to each child each month. Each book also comes with reading tips to encourage home reading by parents with their children. The program is a yearlong initiative operating not only in the four preschool centers, but also in additional community sites. More than 1,000 books a month are distributed to children and families through the program, and numerous City agencies have contributed volunteer readers to the effort.

Non-departmental Partners

NextUp RVA, a public-private partnership now in its third full year of programming, aims both to provide strong support to students that reinforces positive academic and social development, while also lifting the aspirations of students by exposing them to new activities. The program begins after school and lasts until approximately 7 p.m. Participating students were able to select one or two enrichment activities, ranging from cooking classes to gardening music to metalworking to athletics, provided by a variety of local community organizations serving youth. They also participate in a mandatory study hall and receive a snack, evening meal, and transportation back to the school site or to home.

A major feature of NextUp RVA is its collaborative structure, both at the school level and the program as a whole. The school-based programs work collaboratively with school principals and staff, as well as with networks of program providers at each site. NextUp RVA staff can refer children with identified needs to school-based and non-school-based resources, and a major emphasis in the program development is training staff to work effectively with students who have special needs. NextUp RVA conducts professional development activities through the year for staff at the schools. The organization also has developed an extensive system of metrics and self-evaluation to assure that the effort is responsive to community needs as well as maintain high quality standards.

RVA Future is an initiative designed to build a stronger career and college-going culture in Richmond's comprehensive high schools. Data shows that even among RPS graduates, a substantially lower proportion of students are moving on to a two or four year college, or other continuing education or training opportunity, following high school completion compared to the statewide average. Conversely, far more RPS students report completing school with "no plans" compared to the statewide average.

RVA Future aims to address this problem by providing a dedicated space and full-time staff member in each comprehensive high school for the purpose of providing direct guidance and services to students as well as helping coordinate the activities of other organizations providing career and college-related services within the schools; by building a stronger orientation towards planning for life after high school, beginning in ninth grade (or sooner), with the goal of lifting students' horizons and building a future-oriented peer culture within the schools; and by exploring the potential for the community to establish a "Promise Scholarship" program to assure that all RPS

graduates have access to the financial means to attend a college or continuing education program.

In a broader sense, RVA Future, as with the other programs described here, aims to combat what has sometimes been termed the bigotry of low expectations. If year after year RPS students are graduating and going on to continuing education at a substantially lower level than other localities in the region and state, the City will continue to have a grossly disproportionate share of poverty in the decades to come. RVA Future contends that this process can be disrupted by taking proactive, deliberate steps to make students aware of opportunities that are available and to provide step-by-step support and guidance in helping students and families take full advantage of those opportunities.

RVA Future Centers launched in all five comprehensive high schools. Key program highlights this year:

- There are 4780 students enrolled across the five high schools (grades 9-12).
- 1,544 students have signed into the Future Centers, to date (grades 9-12).
- 87% of seniors have signed into the Future Centers, to date.
- 34% of seniors have applied to at least one college, to date.
- 30% of seniors have completed the Free Application For Student Aid (FAFSA), to date.
- 75% of underclassmen have been served via classroom presentations.

Families living with limited economic resources are subject to a variety of stress factors that can impact household stability and student well-being. **Communities In Schools of Richmond (CIS)** is the largest community organization in Richmond providing support services to these students, apart from Richmond Public Schools itself. CIS provides staffing (a site coordinator) to a total of 35 schools in the City of Richmond including seven of eight middle schools, all five comprehensive high schools, and three Performance Learning Centers (PLCs).

CIS programming falls into two categories: broader support services available to all students within a school, and intensive services for students with acute needs or major risk factors for dropping out. The most intensive interventions that CIS facilitates are the Performance Learning Centers. The PLC s are a public/private partnership between CIS and RPS that offer a small, academically rigorous, non-traditional high school environment in which students—many of whom have already dropped out, or may have fallen significantly behind their peers—can catch up and graduate on time. CIS' critical contribution is the integration of community resources with the sustained focus of a caring adult (site coordinator) who interacts with students every day. The site coordinator works to evaluate students' needs and integrate the right blend of supports to meet students' basic and behavioral needs, thereby allowing children to learn and teachers to teach.

HOUSING STRATEGIES

All persons need adequate and safe shelter. Inclusive communities that offer meaningful opportunities to all need this and much more as well: residents desire not only shelter, but to live in safe, thriving neighborhoods with access to employment, good schools, mobility and strong community amenities and assets. This larger environment both defines day-to-day quality of life for residents and also shapes the structure of opportunity available to young people growing up in a neighborhood. Ultimately, the City's successes and failures in providing a strong quality of life are the accumulation of the success of particular neighborhoods.

With respect to the City's community wealth building, there are three major points of emphasis concerning housing:

- First, the need to expand the supply of affordable housing available in the City of Richmond and the Richmond metropolitan area. This is important for two key reasons: first, an adequate supply of affordable housing helps prevent homelessness and near-homelessness (i.e. conditions of overcrowding or residence in plainly unsafe conditions), and makes it easier for homeless service organizations to rapidly rehouse families and individuals in crisis. Second, an adequate supply of affordable housing assures that families with limited or modest incomes do not have to pay an excessive amount of their earnings (i.e. more than 30%) on housing. A reduction in relative housing costs has the same benefit on a household's buying power and quality of life as an increase in earned income. It is estimated that over 80% of households in Richmond with modest income are "housing challenged." These challenges will be exacerbated in certain parts of the City by gentrifying pressures associated with the brisk return of middle and higher-income residents to previously neglected neighborhoods such as Church Hill.
- Second, confronting the challenges associated with Richmond's extreme concentration of poverty. Again, the challenge is twofold: first, developing and implementing a model for the transformation of public housing communities in Richmond into thriving mixed-income communities, in a way that assures that all residents are not only adequately housed at the end of the process but effectively supported and engaged at every step of the process. Second, because the process of public housing redevelopment is complex and multi-year, and because Richmond has not one but six major public housing communities (400 units or more), steps also must be taken to bring more resources, improved service delivery, and improved opportunities for resident leadership and development to the remaining RRHA communities. Concerted, geographically action to achieve redevelopment is necessary to drive meaningful change, but this cannot become an excuse for neglect of other communities.
- Third, the need to improve quality of life and neighborhood amenities within high-poverty communities, defined here as neighborhoods with a poverty rate of 20% or greater. Richmond has several neighborhoods that, while not marked by an extreme concentration of poverty, nonetheless have substantial challenges. High quality public goods such as parks, recreational facilities, accessible healthy food, opportunities for

walking and cycling, and strong public safety can make a huge difference in the viability of such neighborhoods.

Expanding the Supply of Affordable Housing

The City of Richmond established an **Affordable Housing Trust Fund** (AHTF) in 2008, but the fund did not receive dedicated funding until FY 2015. As part of the Maggie L. Walker Initiative, \$975,000 were allocated to the fund, with a further \$25,000 provided to staff and support the operations of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Oversight Board. The fund is administered by the staff of the Department of Economic and Community Development.

The purpose of the fund is to support the rehabilitation or construction of new affordable housing units, leveraging private project dollars. Grants through the Fund are available through a competitive application process. To receive consideration for funding, applications must “show a direct relationship to one or more of the following:

- The provision of housing to low and moderate income households.
- Construction-related activities for construction producing units for sale or rent to low and moderate income households.
- Housing-related support services provided to low and moderate income households.”

Low-and-moderate income households are defined as households earning less than 80% of Area Median Income (AMI). More specific guidelines for the composition of each project note:

Based on applications received, and within the extent possible, at least one-third (1/3) of grants or loan from the AHTF will be targeted for housing units that benefit residents with incomes at or below 30% AMI. For multifamily projects, preference will be given to projects for which 50% of the units are available for residents with incomes less than 50% AMI and the remaining 50% of the units for projects assisting incomes of 50-80% AMI. Homeownership activities that serve residents with incomes less than 80% AMI may be supported by the AHTF. (Affordable Housing Trust Fund Guidelines, FY 2016)

Further details on the program guidelines and operations can be found at:

http://www.yesrichmondva.com/sites/default/files/documents/AHTFGuidelines_0.pdf

In December 2015, the City announced the 2015 AHTF awards, totaling nearly one million dollars. The awards are expected to generate more than \$23.5 million in affordable housing development in the city and nearly 200 new and rehabilitated affordable housing units. In addition, special housing related services will be provided to more than 220 families and homeless individuals.

The list of affordable housing developments and services receiving AHTF awards includes:

- William Byrd Senior Apartments with Project HOMES
- Cary Street Preservation Project with Better Housing Coalition
- Studios II with Virginia Supportive Housing
- Eggleston Plaza with The Hanson Company
- Wheelchair Ramp Project with Project HOMES
- Rebuilding Together Year Round with Rebuilding Together of Richmond
- Move to Opportunity with Housing Opportunities Made Equal
- Home Again Rapid Re-Housing Project with Emergency Shelter, Inc., and Home Again
- Home Link with Virginia Supportive Housing
- Flagler Rapid Re-Housing with St. Joseph's Villa
- Coordinated Outreach with The Daily Planet

The next round of AHTF awards will be announced in mid-2017.

Public Housing and Public Housing Redevelopment
Improving General Conditions in RRHA: Community Health Centers, Community Navigators

Analysis of life expectancy data in Richmond neighborhoods conducted by the VCU Center for Society & Health has shown that residents of large public housing complexes in Richmond have life expectancy of up to twenty years less than residents of more affluent Richmond neighborhoods. These stark differences in health outcomes reflect massive differences in what are commonly termed the “social determinants of health”—that is, social and economic conditions that both directly impact health and also impact propensity of residents to practice healthy behavior. Lack of employment opportunities, public amenities, strong recreational facilities, access to healthy food, social connectedness and general public safety undermine human health, both physical and mental. High-poverty communities also are correlated with increased incidence of substance abuse, general violent behavior, and gun violence.

In the past five years, the Richmond City Health District has taken important steps to begin addressing health conditions in Richmond's public housing communities. By way of collaboration with the Richmond Redevelopment & Housing Authority, each of the six large public housing communities now have a unit or community space which serves as a health resource center within each community. The health resource centers contain information on healthy behavior and community resources, as well as basic facilities to permit routine examinations and basic treatments of immediate needs. In addition to access to professional medical staffing, each resource center hosts a *community advocate*. Community advocates are part-time employees who generally reside in the public housing communities they serve. The advocates are charged with taking information and resources on health-related issues from the community centers directly into the neighborhood by forming connections and relationships with residents.

In 2014, a key recommendation of the Housing taskforce of the Maggie L. Walker Initiative was to build upon this successful model by creating a *housing advocate* program. As with the community advocate initiative, the concept is to employ community members to provide information and knowledge about resources to fellow community members. The focus of the housing advocate program is on connecting residents to self-sufficiency resources as well as promoting lease compliance and positive community engagement among residents. In fall of 2014, the housing advocate program began under the management of the Richmond City Health District, working in close collaboration with the Office of Community Wealth Building and with RRHA. The program is now known as the Good Neighbor Initiative, and consist of part-time housing advocates serving each public housing community, supervisor Kelly Evans, and management support from RCHD and the Institute for Public Health Innovation, a nonprofit organization that also provides management support to the health resource center program.

A major impetus for starting the Good Neighbor Initiative was to begin a process of community education to encourage residents of public housing to acquire good information and a strong understanding of expectations and responsibilities associated with the anticipated redevelopment of one or more public housing communities. Lease compliance is typically a minimal requirement of eligibility to move into a newly redeveloped mixed-income community, as well as for participation in other programs. Housing advocates can help residents identify issues, taking a problem-solving rather than punitive approach. The focus of the Good Neighbor Initiative has broadened, however, to take a positive approach towards helping residents access resources and opportunities, building relationships of trust, and encouraging resident community participation. Staff of the Good Neighbor Initiative also are often involved in other community wealth building-related projects, including the East End Transformation project in Creighton Court.

The Mayor's Anti-Poverty Commission called for the exploration of public housing redevelopment according to a public policy process that assures that residents are not involuntarily displaced and that engages residents in the process. The extremely dense concentration of public housing in Richmond has been designed to, in effect, be difficult to undo. For instance, in the East End an optimal approach would look at the entire area and examine potential redevelopment and revitalization of all four major public housing communities in the footprint. But it is not feasible for a city of Richmond's size to assemble the resources for such a massive overhaul, nor are federal funds at that scale likely to become available until Richmond demonstrates the ability to execute complex redevelopment projects on a smaller scale.

The City of Richmond and Richmond Redevelopment & Housing Authority have over the past several years advanced plans for the transformation of one or more public housing communities in the East End. Current efforts focus on the planned redevelopment of Creighton Court, a 504-unit public housing community, into a mixed-income community. Median household income in Creighton Court is less than \$10,000, the poverty rate in the overall neighborhood is approximately 67%, and employment

levels are far lower than the citywide average. The project as a whole would involve the development of 1200-1400 units, with units both in the immediate neighborhood and scattered across the City and potentially region. Already funding has been secured for phase one of the redevelopment, involving the construction of 128 new housing units on the site of the old Armstrong High School. Eventually 256 units will be built on the Armstrong site. There are an additional 129 project based vouchers available to residents who choose not to live at Armstrong or Creighton. While the Housing Authority was unsuccessful in its bid for Choice Neighborhoods Funding, the City and the Housing Authority have committed to following the tenets of the People Plan developed during the application process which is to improve educational outcomes and intergenerational mobility for youth with services and supports delivered directly to youth and their families.

The specific role of the Office of Community Wealth Building has been to help assemble the “People” component of the plan, in conjunction with service providers and community partners. The People plan focuses on providing focused, household-by-household services and support to all residents in Creighton Court, with a particular focus on education, employment, child care, and health. These focus points are informed by a detailed 2014 resident needs assessment conducted in Creighton Court. Specific strategies concerning employment and workforce development will be strongly informed by the program of the Office of Community Wealth Building. The first phase of the plan was initiated in spring of 2016, when Richmond City Health District hired a Family Transition Coach to work with the first eighteen families selected to transition from Creighton Court to the new Armstrong site. To date there are two Family Transition Coaches on site working with all 504 households. A People Plan Steering Committee has been meeting since September and is overseeing the People Plan process.

The primary aim of the Creighton Court revitalization project is to produce a better quality-of-life for residents, including especially low-income residents. This improvement will have at least four components: an improvement in the quality and variety of housing units available to low-income residents; an improvement in amenities, resources, and assets in the surrounding neighborhood available to residents; a deliberate strategy to connect all households in the redevelopment process to educational and employment opportunities and related services; and a long-term commitment to enhance the overall economic opportunities available to residents of the Creighton Court area and the East End as a whole.

During the Next Year

Employment

- Continue to request funds to expand the service levels provided by the Center for Workforce Innovation, in order to meet the demand, strengthening long-term tracking of participants, and building strong collaborations with other workforce providers
- Expand the BLISS program

- Execute the Social Enterprise work plan; collaborate with community partners to leverage the culinary program at the Conrad Culinary Training Center
- Collaborate with the Department of Economic and Community Development on business recruitment activities with the aim of strengthening connections with employers
- Participating in workforce development planning for the needs of the Richmond Maritime Terminal (Port of Richmond) and related initiatives in the area
- Assist as assigned in the successful implementation of the GRTC Pulse project and in continued advocacy for a regional transit system
- Explore other transit mobility opportunities for CWI participants, like Uber or Lyft
- Refine the MYA to leverage the resources and opportunities available through CWI

Education

- Promote the Education Compact

Housing

- Continue to support the Affordable Housing Trust Fund
- Continued development and possible expansion of Good Neighborhood Initiative
- Serve as the convener for the service providers committed to the People Plan for the East End

Administrative/General

- Adequately meet staffing needs in order to achieve goals of moving 1000 people out of poverty each year
- Continue community outreach, using various special events, Virtual Town Halls and social media platforms
- Continue development of the Maggie L. Walker Citizens Advisory Board
- Continue development of relationships and partnerships with local philanthropic institutions, universities, health systems, business organizations, and other stakeholders supportive of community wealth building goals
- Develop and maintain system for tracking data and regular reporting across all program areas
- Intensify strategy to hear from “the people” and incorporate the truth of their lives into the overarching Community Wealth Building Strategy
- Create an annual Community Wealth Builder Award program

APPENDIX: TARGETS AND METRICS

Establishing and publicizing clear targets and metrics of evaluation is an essential component of sustained success in the community wealth building effort. The 2016 report of the Office of Community Wealth Building introduced a system of eighteen metrics of progress across the three major policy areas of employment, education and housing, as well as baseline measures for each metric. This report updates each of those measures using the most recent available data from the U.S. Census Bureau and

other authoritative sources. Throughout this report, the most recent trend line data is marked in bold.

TOP-TIER METRICS: POVERTY, CHILD POVERTY, and POVERTY RATE

The City of Richmond has set three long-term goals for its poverty reduction initiative:

- Reduce the total number of residents in poverty (apart from college students) by 40% by 2030 (relative to 2014 baseline)
- Reduce the number of children in the city living in poverty by 50% by 2030 (relative to 2014 baseline)
- Reduce the City's overall poverty rate to 15% or less by 2030

To measure progress towards achieving these goals, the City will track the following four indicators:

- Number of persons in poverty (total and excluding college students)
- Number of children (persons aged 17 and under) in poverty
- The City's overall poverty rate, as measured and reported by the U.S. Census
- The City's child poverty rate

All four of these indicators are measured and reported by the U.S. Census Bureau. Prior to 2005, the decennial Census was the primary authoritative source of local poverty data. The 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990 and 2000 Censuses reported the poverty rate for each county unit in the U.S. in the previous year. (For instance, respondents to the 1970 Census were asked about their household income in 1969). No authoritative poverty data is available prior to 1959. The measure of poverty utilized in this report is the official poverty measure established by the federal government.

While the top-tiered indicators identified by the City are closely related to one another, each is of independent significance.

The City's **poverty rate** is the most widely cited metric in public discourse concerning poverty in Richmond. It is important both because it illustrates the share of the City population at any given time experiencing severe economic distress and because it illustrates the magnitude of the strain poverty places on the City's fiscal and economic condition. A city with a higher proportion of persons in poverty is going to have a larger number of residents in need of services from city government (and other providers), and will have fewer residents capable of making a significant contribution to local revenues via property and sales taxes.

The total **number of persons** in poverty is the most direct measure of the number of residents of Richmond in severe economic need. The ethical goal of a poverty reduction initiative must be to provide pathways to higher incomes and economic self-sufficiency for residents currently in poverty. Because the City of Richmond is currently in a period of strong population growth that is expected to continue for the foreseeable future, it is quite possible that the City's poverty *rate* could reduce while the number of persons living in poverty in the City remains largely unchanged. *This is not an acceptable*

outcome. Rather, the aim is to reduce the number of people in poverty in absolute terms through community wealth building strategies. [1]

Finally, number of **children in poverty** and the **child poverty rate** carry special significance for the City of Richmond. In ethical terms, children are often the worst victims of poverty. Children, until at least high school age, typically have no ability to impact their household’s income or other family circumstances impacting well-being. Yet children suffer the consequences of economic deprivation, stress, and other adverse events, all of which may inhibit health physical, emotional, and cognitive development. For a child to grow up without the resources and supportive environment required to reach his or her full potential is a fundamental injustice. Hence there is an ethical imperative to reduce as rapidly as possible the number of children growing up in poverty in Richmond. The child poverty *rate* is also significant, as a high concentration of child poverty has profound impacts on the nature and success of public education and the degree to which children are schooled in diverse environments that prepare students for success in a wider world.

Table A. Poverty and Child Poverty in the City of Richmond, 1959-2015

Poverty Rate	Excluding Undergraduates	Child Poverty
1959	28.9% (60,501)	N/A
1969	18.0% (43,355)	N/A
1979	19.3% (40,228)	N/A
1989	20.9% (40,103)	N/A
1999	21.4% (40,185)	N/A
2005-09 (14,212)	22.1% (42,208)	N/A
2006-10	25.3% (48,452)	22.7% (39,916)
2007-11	26.3% (50,825)	23.8% (42,009)
2008-12	26.7% (52,260)	24.3% (43,508)
2009-13	25.6% (50,681)	23.1% (41,988)
2010-14	25.5% (51,295)	23.4% (43,371)
2011-15	25.5% (51,828)	23.7% (44,739)
		38.7% (14,952)
		40.5% (15,517)
		40.4% (15,548)
		38.8% (14,730)
		39.5% (15,101)
		40.0% (15,303)

Trend change with respect to poverty is best assessed over a fairly long time horizon. While it is possible and desirable to track year-to-year changes in the Census poverty numbers for the City, the annual figures have uncertainty attached to them (the statistical margin of error). It may take five to ten years to definitely detect long-term trend change in the poverty rate: that is, to be able to state with near or total certainty that the poverty rate has declined (or increased).

In addition, these Top-Tier Metrics—the overall number of persons in poverty, the number of children in poverty, and the poverty rate for children and for all persons—reflect the cumulative impact of multiple factors. The ability to earn enough money to lift one’s family above the poverty line is influenced by the skills, workforce experience, and

education one has attained. But a child’s ability to learn in school is directly influenced by the home environment, including the household’s economic situation and overall stress level. The ability of both individual families and entire schools to attain educational success are deeply impacted by the circumstances of the surrounding neighborhood. Meaningful change in the long-term poverty rate can only be attained by making strong progress in the three core areas of employment, educational outcomes, and housing.

For both these reasons, in addition to reporting the Top-Tier Metrics, this report also presents a system of **Intermediate Metrics** aimed at tracking and capturing more specific indicators in the three core areas of **Employment, Education, and Housing**. Improvements in these indicators portend improvements in the long-term poverty rate, and in many cases substantial changes in the Intermediate Metrics may become evident more quickly than changes in the overall poverty rate. In short, if progress is being made in the Intermediate Metrics, progress in the Top-Tier Metrics should soon follow.

It is important to understand that these Intermediate Metrics, like the Top Tier Metrics, reflect the results of a combination of factors. **It does not fall on any one initiative or even institution to bear sole responsibility for driving progress in these metrics. Success or failure is rather a collective byproduct of multiple institutions as well as the scale, scope and effectiveness of the resources devoted to driving improvement in each specific area.**

EMPLOYMENT, EARNINGS and ACCESS-RELATED METRICS

Poverty as officially measured by the federal government is a direct reflection of earned household income. The primary source of household income for the overwhelming majority of the population is income earned through employment. To reduce poverty, more people who are now unemployed or under-employed must obtain and maintain full-time employment.

The fundamental relationship between employment and poverty can be illustrated through 2011-2015 Census Data.

Table E-0. Employment Status and Poverty (persons age 16 and over), City of Richmond, 2011-15

	Above Poverty Line	Below Poverty Line	% in
Poverty			
Worked Full-Time, Year-Round	2,245		3.3%
Worked Part-Time or Part-Year	14,710		32.2%
Did Not Work	32,721	20,758	38.8%

Source: American Community Survey, 2011-2015, Table S-1701.

As Table E-0 shows, 94.0% of City residents aged 16 or above living in poverty do not work full-time, year-round.

This report utilizes the following indicators of employment and earnings:

E-1. *Official Unemployment Rate (relative to state average)*

E-2. *Proportion Adults Aged 25-64 Employed Full-Time (relative to state average)*

E-3. *Employment Level for High School Graduates (relative to state average)*

E-4. *Median Earnings for High School Graduates (relative state average)*

E-5. *Proportion of Full-Time Year-Round Workers Earning Less than \$30,000 (relative to state average)*

E-6. *Proportion of Jobs in City of Richmond, Henrico County, and Chesterfield County Currently Being Accessed by Public Transportation*

Data and notes for these indicators are presented in the following pages.

Table E-1. Official Unemployment Rate, City of Richmond and Commonwealth of Virginia, 2005-2015

		City of Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
2005-09	<i>Total</i>	10.2%	5.4%
2008-12	<i>Total</i>	11.0%	6.9%
2010-14	<i>Total</i>	10.7%	6.9%
2011-15	<i>Total</i>	10.0%	6.5%

Sources: American Community Survey Table S-2301. [2]

Table E-2. Full Time, Year-Round Employment, by Gender, City of Richmond and Commonwealth of Virginia (Aged 16 and Over, Excluding College Students in Dorms)

		City of Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
2006-10		40.2%	46.7%
2008-12		39.9%	46.9%
2010-14		40.6%	46.0%
2011-15	<i>Total:</i>	41.0%	46.1%
	<i>Male:</i>	44.7%	54.1%
	<i>Female:</i>	37.7%	38.6%

Source: American Community Survey, Table B-17004.

Table E-3. Employment Status of Adults with High School Diploma Highest Level of Educational Attainment, Aged 25-64

City of Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
Employed (Unemployment Rate)	

2006-10	65.0% (11.3%)	71.9% (5.9%)
2008-12	63.2% (11.7%)	79.2% (7.2%)
2010-14	62.9% (11.9%)	69.3% (7.4%)
2011-15	61.7% (12.3%)	69.4% (6.9%)

Source: American Community Survey, Table B23006.

Notes: Tables E-1, E-2, and E-3 track employment levels in the City of Richmond over time, using statewide figures as a benchmark. Official unemployment (persons in the labor market who are actively seeking work), is currently 4.5% higher in the City compared to the Commonwealth. Full-time year-round employment rate in the City, as a percentage of the population above 16, lags the statewide average overall by 5%, and nearly 10% among men. Likewise, the employment rate of high school graduates (but no further education) in the City is nearly 8% lower than the statewide benchmark. Increasing both overall employment and full-time employment in particular are major goals of Richmond's community wealth building agenda.

Table E-4. Median Earnings of Adults with High School Diploma Highest Level of Educational Attainment, By Gender, Aged 25-64

	City of Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
2006-10	\$23,628	\$29,064
2008-12	\$23,723	\$29,464
2010-14	\$23,550	\$29,421
2011-15	\$22,675	\$29,303
Male	\$25,401	\$34,030
Female	\$20,826	\$23,705

Source: American Community Survey, Table B20004.

Table E-5. Proportion of Full-Time Year-Round Workers Earning Less than \$30,000 (relative to state average)

	City of Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
2006-10	36.3%	26.1%
2008-12	33.1%	24.6%

2010-14	31.6%	23.7%
2011-15	32.3%	23.8%
Male 29.9% (10,604 persons)	Male 20.0%	
Female 34.7% (11, 657 persons)	Female 28.9%	

Source: American Community Survey, Table B200005. [3]

Notes: Tables E-4 and E-5 track the median earnings of two groups: persons with a high school diploma but no further formal education, and persons working full-time year-round. Earnings of high school graduates in the City lag the statewide median by over \$6,600, with an even wider gap among males. Just under one-third of full-time year-round workers in Richmond earn less than \$30,000, compared to less than one-quarter statewide. Workers earning this level of income often will be above the federal poverty line, but lack genuine economic security and the ability to build wealth while meeting all basic needs. Closing these earning gaps must be a significant indicator of success in Richmond’s community wealth building effort.

E-6. Number and Proportion of Jobs in City of Richmond, Henrico County, and Chesterfield County Currently Being Accessed by Public Transportation

	Richmond	Henrico	Chesterfield
2005-09	6,996 (4.4%)	1,400 (0.9%)	476 (0.4%)
2008-12	7,628 (4.7%)	1,452 (0.9%)	408 (0.4%)
2010-14	6,198 (3.7%)	1,304 (0.8%)	451 (0.4%)
2011-15	6,456 (3.8%)	1,219 (0.7%)	503 (0.4%)

Source: American Community Survey, Table S-0804.

Notes: The three core localities of the Richmond metropolitan area together have some 459, 272 jobs. 37.2% of these jobs are located within the City of Richmond, and the remainder in Henrico (36.7%) and Chesterfield (26.1%). It is important to understand that nearly 49% of workers in these three jurisdictions (including nearly 44% of City workers) do not work in the same locality in which they live (American Community Survey: Table B-0807). Fewer than 2% of jobs within these jurisdictions are currently being accessed primarily by public transportation, compared to just over 5% nationwide. Nearly 79% of the jobs now being primarily accessed by public transit are within the City of Richmond. The development of a regional transportation system should produce significant increases in all three localities, but with a disproportionate increase in Henrico and Chesterfield. As jobs become accessible by transit lines in (for instance) Henrico, some employees will begin to use public transit to get to work at those jobs

(whether they reside in Henrico, Richmond, or Chesterfield). But as transit lines extend regionally, we should also expect a significant increase in the proportion of jobs within the City being accessed by public transit, as suburban residents working in the City acquire the choice of using public transit to get to their job. A more transit-accessible regional labor market has major positive implications for low-income, carless residents in all jurisdictions as well as additional ecological and community benefits.

EDUCATION-RELATED METRICS

Both educational attainment (the earning of diplomas and degrees) and the quality of education received have a profound impact on the economic prospects of both individuals and communities. The relationship between poverty and educational attainment is illustrated in Table ED-0 below, for both the City of Richmond and the United States as a whole.

Table ED-0. Poverty Level by Educational Attainment, Richmond and U.S., 2011-2015

	Richmond	U.S.
Less than High School	35.6%	27.5%
High School or Equivalent	24.3%	14.3%
Some College	17.6%	10.5%
Bachelor's Degree or higher	6.9%	4.5%

(American Community Survey, 2011-2015: Table S-1701).

This report utilizes the following six metrics of educational attainment. Community progress towards improving these indicators over the next decade portend both improvements in educational outcomes and poverty reduction in Richmond.

Table ED-1. Proportion of entering Kindergartners in Richmond Public Schools failing PALS assessment of school readiness (compared to state benchmark).

Table ED-2. Proportion of 3rd graders in Richmond Public Schools passing Reading SOL test (compared to state benchmark).

Tables ED-3a and ED-3b. Proportion of 8th graders in Richmond Public Schools passing Reading and Math SOL tests (compared to state benchmark).

Table ED-4. Graduation rate of Richmond Public Schools and percentage of class graduating with advanced diploma (compared to state benchmark).

Table ED-5. Proportion of Richmond Public Schools graduates going on to post-secondary education--technical training, two-year college, or four-year college (compared to state benchmark)

Table ED-6. Number of teenagers in City of Richmond not enrolled in school and not employed (i.e. “disconnected youth”).

Data and notes for these indicators are presented in the following pages.

Table ED-1. Proportion of Entering Kindergartners in Richmond Public Schools Needing a Literacy Intervention Based on PALS Assessment of School Readiness

	Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
2010	20.7%	13.4%
2012	21.4%	12.4%
2014	23.7%	12.9%
2015	25.2%	13.8%

Source: Smart Beginnings Greater Richmond, accessed at <http://www.virginiareportcard.com/map.php>; United Way Indicators of Community Strength 2016, available at http://www.yourunitedway.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/UW-GRP_CommIndicatorReport_2016-FINAL.pdf.

Notes: The PALS (Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening) assessment tool measures the readiness of Kindergarten students to engage in the process of learning to read. Tasks Kindergartners are measured on include recognizing rhymes, recognizing letters, recognizing letter sounds, recognizing the concept of words, and related tasks. In Richmond, nearly twice as many Kindergarten students as the statewide average were assessed as requiring a literacy intervention in fall of 2014. This figure has risen in Richmond since 2010, a concerning trend. The PALS measure is a good summary statistic of the community’s collective success or failure in adequately providing quality early childhood education to Richmond residents.

Table ED-2. Proportion of 3rd graders in Richmond Public Schools Passing Reading SOL Test (Compared to State Benchmark).

Overall Pass Rate, with Advanced Pass in Parentheses

	Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
2012-13	56% (13%)	72% (19%)
2013-14	54% (11%)	69% (16%)
2014-15	64% (17%)	75% (21%)

2015-16	62% (11%)	76% (17%)
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Source: Virginia Department of Education: Virginia School Report Card, Richmond City Public Schools, 2015-16.

Notes: The gap in literacy readiness between Richmond children and the Commonwealth as a whole evident in Kindergarten is reflected in differences at the third grade reading level as well. In 2015-16, Richmond third graders passed the Reading Standards of Learning test at a rate fourteen points below the statewide average.

Table ED-3a. Proportion of 8th graders in Richmond Public Schools Passing Reading SOL Test (Compared to State Benchmark).
Overall Pass Rate, with Advanced Pass in Parentheses

	Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
2012-13	39% (2%)	71% (12%)
2013-14	33% (2%)	70% (11%)
2014-15	46% (4%)	75% (11%)
2015-16	45% (5%)	75% (14%)

Tables ED-3b. Proportion of 8th graders in Richmond Public Schools Passing Math SOL tests (Compared to State Benchmark).
Overall Pass Rate, with Advanced Pass in Parentheses

	Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
2012-13	35% (1%)	61% (6%)
2013-14	37% (3%)	67% (9%)
2014-15	44% (2%)	74% (10%)
2015-16	43% (1%)	73% (9%)

Source: Virginia Department of Education: Virginia School Report Card, Richmond City Public Schools, 2015-16.

Notes: While the academic gap between Richmond students and the Commonwealth as a whole is visible at the elementary level, with gaps of 14 and 9 points in 5th grade reading and mathematics in 2015-16 SOL performance, this gap widens into a chasm during the middle school years. This chasm is illustrated by Table ED-3a and ED-3b,

show math and reading performance of 8th graders in Richmond compared to statewide. In 2015-16, fewer than half of Richmond eighth graders passed the reading and math SOLs, compared to about three-quarters of students on each test statewide, a gap of 30 percentage points in each subject. This gap is only partly explained by poverty: when considering only economically disadvantaged students the gap between Richmond students and all Virginia students remains 20 points in reading and 23 points in math.

Table ED-4. Graduation Rate of Richmond Public Schools and Percentage of Class Graduating with Standard or Advanced Diploma (Compared to State Benchmark).

	Richmond			Commonwealth of Virginia		
	Overall	Standard	Advanced	Overall	Standard	Advanced
2011	71.0%	61.2%	22.6%	86.6%	82.7%	47.3%
2013	76.2%	65.3%	27.2%	89.1%	85.4%	49.7%
2015	81.3%	70.6%	27.0%	90.5%	86.7%	51.5%
2016	80.5%	69.9%	27.0%	91.3%	87.7%	51.7%

Left-hand column shows the official graduation rate (including special and modified diplomas); middle-column shows proportion of cohort graduating with a Standard OR Advanced diploma; right-hand column shows proportion of cohort graduating with Advanced Diploma only.

Source: Virginia Department of Education: Virginia Cohort Reports (4 Year).

Notes: For many years the City of Richmond has ranked at or near the bottom of official graduation rates in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The gap between overall graduation rates between the City and statewide is nearly 11%. Moreover, the gap between the number of Richmond students receiving at least a standard high school diploma, a baseline standard for career readiness, and the statewide average remains much larger—17.8%, despite recent gains. The largest gap of all can be found in the proportion of students graduating with an advanced diploma (requiring completion of a more rigorous high school academic program). Over half of students statewide graduate with an advanced diploma—a good measure of basic readiness for college-level work—compared to 27% in Richmond. That gap of 24.7% portends poorly for the economic competitiveness of Richmond graduates vis-à-vis their peers statewide.

Table ED-5. Proportion of Richmond Public Schools Graduates with Standard or Advanced Diploma Enrolling in Two-year College or Four-year College Within 16 Months of Graduation (Compared to State Benchmark)

Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
Total/4-Year College Only	Total/4-Year College Only

Class of 2011	60%/37%	71%/42%
Class of 2013	58%/36%	72%/43%
Class of 2014	55%/34%	72%/43%

Source: Virginia Department of Education: High School Graduates Postsecondary Enrollment Report.

Notes: Table ED-5 reports the proportion of Richmond high school graduates *with at least a standard diploma* going on to a two-or-four year college within 16 months of graduation. The gap between Richmond college-going and the statewide average appears to have actually grown slightly since 2011, to 17% (55% compared to 72%) for the class of 2014, the last year for which complete data is available. This table is best understood in combination with the previous table, Table ED-4. When one combines the difference in the share of the class cohort graduating with a standard diploma or higher, and the likelihood of those graduates going on to college, the combined effect is that in 2012-13, only 38% of Richmond’s senior cohort graduated high school with a standard diploma or higher and then enrolled in a two or four-year school, compared to 61% statewide. This gap is equivalent to roughly 350 students a year who either are not graduating with a standard diploma or not continuing their education after high school. That gap can be describe as creating a virtual pipeline into poverty, and helps explain the high rate of “disconnected youth” in Richmond (see Table ED-6, just below).

Table ED-6. Number of Teenagers (16-19) in City of Richmond Not Enrolled in School and Not Employed (i.e. “Disconnected Youth”), Total and as Percentage of All Teenagers, by Gender.

	Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
2006-2010	1,256 (8.6%)	29,024 (6.4%)
2008-2012	1,488 (11.2%)	30, 248 (6.8%)
2010-2014	1,501 (12.0%)	29, 924 (6.7%)
2011-2015	1,442 (12.0%)	28,388 (6.4%)
	<i>Male:</i> 925 (16.6%)	16,208 (7.2%)
	<i>Female</i> 517 (8.0%)	12,180 (5.7%)

Source: American Community Survey, Table B14005

Notes: Nearly one in eight teenagers aged 16-19 in the City are neither enrolled in school nor employed. This rate climbs to over one in seven for males in this age group. In the absence of meaningful interventions offering employment, training or educational opportunities to this group, many are likely to fail to grab an economic foothold at this critical period of life. Not a few, as well, are likely to slip into trouble with the criminal justice system. The “disconnected youth” indicator is in a sense the logical inverse of Tables ED-4 and ED-5: it captures the consequence of school failure and failure to provide adequate career and educational pathways to all children in Richmond.

HOUSING, QUALITY-OF-LIFE, and HEALTH

Housing is a basic human need and fundamental to the stability of individuals and families. Housing insecurity is a major source of stress for economically disadvantaged residents. It is also a major cost, and often the highest priority cost, for families with limited economic resources. But a decent society and an inclusive city should do more than simply assure access to safe housing; it also should work to create neighborhoods that are safe, thriving, and encouraging social and economic inclusion and integration rather than isolation. Enormous social science research documents the manner in which extreme concentrations of poverty multiply the stress and impact of low-income families. Richmond’s approach must aim both at building community wealth and seeking ways to redress extreme concentrations of poverty, specifically neighborhoods with poverty rates exceeding 40%. Health outcomes, another fundamental measure of well-being, are also closely associated with neighborhood context. The following measures assess the City’s affordability, its efforts and results in weakening concentrated poverty, the safety of its neighborhoods, and the access to health coverage and life expectancy of its residents.

Table H-1. % of Housing-Burdened Households in City, All Households and Households Earning < \$35,000

Table H-2. Number of Large Public Housing Communities Redeveloped According to Process Assuring One-for-One Replacement and Community Engagement in Process

Table H-3. % of City Residents Who Are in Poverty AND Live in Census Tract with Greater Than 40% Poverty Rate

Table H-4. Violent Crime Rate Citywide and by Council District

Table H-5. Health Insurance Coverage—Number and Proportion of Residents Lack Insurance Coverage

Table H-6. Years of Life Lost to Premature Death (Before Age 75) per 100,000

Table H-1. Number and Proportion of Housing-Burdened Households in City, All Households and Households Earning < \$35,000

	Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
2006-2010 All:	38,585 (46%)	34%
Under \$35k Income:	28,401 (77%)	67%
2008-2012 All:	39,113 (47%)	34%
Under \$35k Income:	29,048 (80%)	70%
2010-2014 All:	38,464 (45%)	33%
Under \$35k Income:	28,366 (82%)	71%
2011-2015 All:	38,524 (44%)	32%
Under \$35k Income:	28,883 (81%)	72%

Source: American Community Survey, Table B-25106. Data based on household incomes within all occupied housing units.

Notes: Housing-burdened households refer to households paying more than 30% of their total income on housing costs (rent or mortgage). Household spending beyond this level on housing needs crowds out expenditure on other needs as well as savings and household wealth building. Conversely, having the ability to meet one's housing needs within this threshold permits greater investment in other needs. The proportion of housing-burdened households in a community is a function of two factors: first, the supply of housing in general and affordable housing in particular; and second, the income level of residents. 82% of Richmond residents with household income below \$35,000 are considered to be housing-burdened, a rate that is comparable to yet substantially higher than the statewide average. (This figure excludes persons with no income at all.) Meaningful reductions in this proportion will require a major community commitment to build affordable housing to meet the needs of both current residents and newcomers, but also effective wealth building strategies to allow more Richmond residents to increase household income past the \$35,000 threshold and beyond.

Table H-2. Number of Large Public Housing Communities Redeveloped According to Process Assuring One-for-One Replacement and Community Engagement in Process

	Status Update
2016	Development of first phase of Creighton Court redevelopment planned for 2017: development of 256 new units, 128 of which will be public housing equivalent, on old Armstrong High School site. In 2016, through collaboration between RRHA, RCHD, the Office of Community Wealth Building, and RPS, a comprehensive People Plan was

developed in support of the community transformation process, and initial implementation began with the hiring of two Family Transition Coaches to work with Creighton residents. Richmond’s application for Choice Neighborhoods Initiative grant in 2016 was unsuccessful, but work continues to support both the new development at Armstrong and transition supports for Creighton residents.

Note: Some measures are dichotomous: an event either did or did not happen. Public housing redevelopment done in a just, sensitive, and transformational manner is even in favorable circumstances a multi-year process. To achieve the just redevelopment of even one public housing community would be a major accomplishment, but in Richmond’s case still would leave behind a massive concentration of poverty. But successful completion of the first project according to just principles would in itself create a stronger community capacity to undertake similar projects in the mid-term horizon.

Table H-3. Proportion of City Residents Who Are in Poverty *and* Live in Census Tract with Greater Than 40% Poverty Rate

2008-12	12.2% (23,958)
2010-14	9.5% (19,087)
2011-15	8.1% (16,456)

Source: Derived from American Community Survey, Table S-1701.

Table H-3 is related to yet distinct from Table H-2. Nearly 32% of Richmonders below the poverty line also live in census tracts with poverty rates exceeding 40%. In the most recent American Community Survey, 10 of 58 census tracts in the City have this level of poverty. (This is down from 14 in 2008-12, helping explain the improvement in this metric seen in the most recent data.) Extreme concentration of poverty multiplies disadvantage by exposing residents, especially children, to greater stress and fewer visible signs of opportunity, hope, and possible success. One key goal of public housing redevelopment is to allow more residents in poverty to reside in neighborhoods with a greater mix of income levels, and likely, greater overall community resource level. Public housing redevelopment that simply relocates residents to other extremely high poverty communities will not achieve that goal.

It also should be noted, that while nearly 16,500 low-income residents live in extremely high poverty tracts, many low-income residents (about 15,000) live in tracts with poverty levels between 30 and 40%. As the community wealth building agenda proceeds another goal should be to reduce this number as well—less via housing redevelopment strategies than by generating more employment, income and wealth within these areas so that the poverty rate itself falls in these neighborhoods.

Table H-4. Violent Crime Rate Citywide and by Council District, 2015
Homicides (Assaults in Parentheses)

Citywide	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
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2000 (540)	73 (5867) 0 (237)	2 (109)		9 (629)		7
2015 (623)	43 (4409) 2 (185)	1 (976)		1 (305)		5
	5th	6th	7th	8th		9th
2000	4 (575)		19 (1343)	11 (895)	14 (963)	7 (576)
2015 (656)	2 (408) 7 (575)		13 (938)	7 (640)		5

Source: Richmond Police Department Crime Incident Information Center, <http://eservices.ci.richmond.va.us/applications/crimeinfo/index.asp>
Note changes in District totals over time reflect redistricting plan adopted in 2011 as well as real trend changes. At this time full 2016 data are not available through the Crime Incident Information Center.

Table H-5. Health Insurance Coverage—Proportion and Number of Residents Lacking Insurance Coverage

	Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
2008-12	17.6% (35,590)	12.3%
2010-14	17.5% (36,408)	12.1%
2011-15	16.9% (35, 719)	11.4%

Source: American Community Survey, Table S-2701.

Table H-6. Years of Potential Life Lost to Premature Death (Before Age 75) per 100,000 persons

	Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
2007-09	11,786	6,566
2009-11	10,364	6,270
2011-13	9,668	6,147
2012-14	9,626	6,088

Source: Healthindicators.gov, via County Health Rankings (www.countyhealthrankings.org).

Notes: The final two indicators are measure of health coverage and health itself. Despite the recent national health care reforms, Richmond residents still lack coverage at a substantially higher rate than the Commonwealth average of 11.4%. Virginia has not approved expansion of Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act, thereby creating a large gap in coverage for families who are not extremely poor but make too little income to qualify for or afford the health insurance exchange. This gap is particularly damaging to persons just above the poverty line, and represents a major threat to thousands of Richmond households struggling to escape poverty in a sustainable way or avoid falling from modest but decent income into poverty.

The final measure tracks the level of premature death in the community, measured as years of life lost prior to age 75 per 100,000 residents in the community. Richmond's current measure of nearly 10,000 years per 100,000 persons is notably down since the late 2000s, but still is over 50% higher than the statewide average and nearly double the rate in neighboring Chesterfield and Henrico Counties. This measure of premature death can be taken as a result of the cumulative impacts of poverty, stress, violence, and poor health on life expectancy itself. Poverty, and community wealth building, are literally life and death matters.

[1] Note here that the policy focus of City government is appropriately on long-term residents living in poverty, not on college students classified as living in poverty while attending college in the City of Richmond. About 7,000 persons in Richmond classified as in poverty are college students. Consequently, we report both the total number of persons in poverty and the total number of residents in poverty excluding college students.

[2] Note: Estimates of unemployment from the Census are distinct from those produced by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. For consistency with other employment indicators based on the Census, the Census measure of unemployment is used in this report.

[3] In Tables E-4 and E-5, dollar values are inflation-adjusted for the last year in each series (i.e. 2006-2010 figure is in 2010 dollars). Dollar values are *not* adjusted for inflation over time between data points (i.e. between 2011 and 2015.)