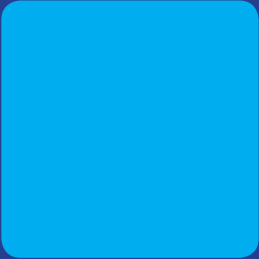


# OFFICE OF COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING

# YEAR ONE ANNUAL REPORT

City Of Richmond, Virginia  
April 2016



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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This report has been produced on behalf of Mayor Dwight C. Jones by the Office of Community Wealth Building. The staff of the Office would like to in particular thank Ms. Selena Cuffee-Glenn, Chief Administrative Officer and her staff and the Mayor's Office for their support in preparing this document. Staff would also like to thank our affiliated partner organizations who so generously provided data for this report.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Poverty harms all residents of the City of Richmond, not just those that have inadequate resources to meet their basic needs. For generations, the City has been hampered by a poverty level that is more than twice the statewide average, and includes some of the most extreme concentrations of poverty in the entire United States. Poverty begets crime and violence, hampers the success of public education in the City, harms the City's tax base, and undermines quality of life for all residents. The continued existence of extreme poverty also contributes to the vast divide—literally, a tale of two cities—between Richmonders who are enjoying the full benefits of the City's many positive attributes and those residents who are in effect excluded.

The City of Richmond was found by the Equality of Opportunity Project at Harvard to be among the worst 2% of all county units in the United States--48th worst out of 2,478--in fostering upward mobility.



Over the past five years, the City of Richmond has engaged in a sustained effort to redress this reality, starting with the formation of the Mayor's Anti-Poverty Commission in 2011. Following publication of the Mayor's Anti-Poverty Commission Report in January 2013, the Maggie L. Walker Initiative for Expanding Opportunity and Fighting Poverty was formed to translate the broad recommendations of the Anti-Poverty Commission Report into specific action steps that local government could take to advance five key priorities:

- Expanded workforce development
- Targeted job creation
- Improved educational outcomes
- Development of a regional transportation system
- Pursuing the redevelopment of one or more public housing communities with a commitment to no involuntary displacement of residents.

A total of seven task forces, coordinated by initiative co-chairs Hon. Ellen Robertson and Dr. Thad Williamson, developed specific action recommendations, each of which was vetted by a Citizens Advisory Board consisting primarily of persons living or working in high-poverty neighborhoods. The initiative was purposefully named for a homegrown Richmond hero who, in the racially oppressive context of early 20th century Richmond, successfully built community wealth while blazing trails for African-Americans and women, Maggie L. Walker.



In March 2014, Mayor Dwight C. Jones announced a total of nearly \$3.4 million in FY 2015 funding for a comprehensive poverty reduction initiative encompassing workforce and economic development, housing, education, and transportation. Included in this package was the establishment of the Mayor's Office of Community Wealth Building, a new unit within City government charged with leading implementation of this agenda. In April 2014, Dr. Thad Williamson was named by Mayor Jones the first director of the Office, which formally launched in June 2014. After being based in the Office of the

Deputy Chief Administrative Office for Human Services for eighteen months, the Office of Community Wealth Building became an independent department by action of City Council in December 2015. By ordinance, the Office of Community Wealth Building is charged with providing policy advice to the Mayor on anti-poverty strategies and leading implementation of the City's poverty reduction initiative. Operationally, the Director of the Office of Community Wealth Building is appointed by and reports to the Chief Administrative Officer.

The formation of the Office of Community Wealth Building is a significant civic innovation within City government designed to foster a more holistic, comprehensive approach to poverty reduction. The establishment of the Office is a critical step in allowing the City to pursue its announced policy goals of **reducing overall poverty by 40% and child poverty by 50% in Richmond by 2030**. Housing, education, and economic development cannot easily be separated from one another, and when confronted with poverty of the magnitude found in Richmond, siloed approaches that attempt to address one aspect of the problem in isolation are destined to fail. In addition to taking direct responsibility for certain key initiatives—in particular workforce development—the Office is charged with working across multiple City agencies and portfolios as well as with crucial external agencies such as Richmond Public Schools and the Richmond Redevelopment & Housing Authority to advance a comprehensive poverty reduction agenda. Importantly, the Office also has been given responsibility for development of a system of metrics and evaluative tools to track the ongoing progress of the initiative, and for publishing these measures of progress at least annually in a written report to City Council.

#### Five key policy priorities:

- 1 Expanded workforce development
- 2 Targeted job creation
- 3 Improved educational outcomes
- 4 Development of a regional transportation system
- 5 Pursuing the redevelopment of one or more public housing communities with a commitment to no involuntary displacement of residents.

The establishment of the Office is a critical step in allowing the City to pursue its announced policy goals of reducing overall poverty by 40% and child poverty by 50% in Richmond by 2030.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The aim of this report is to share with stakeholders and the general public a detailed account of the work and accomplishments to date of the Office of Community Wealth Building, and the progress of Richmond's efforts to reverse 400 years of history with respect to structural inequality and impoverishment. While this work is still in its early stages, important work has already been accomplished, laying the groundwork for more rapid progress in the future. Key accomplishments to date include:

- The development of a local-ly-funded workforce initiative to connect residents to employment, the Center for Workforce Innovation
- The development of a comprehensive, family-based approach to support families seeking to exit poverty, called BLISS (Building Lives to Independence and Self-Sufficiency)
- The ongoing development of the City of Richmond's first ever social enterprise strategy, a promising new approach to leveraging community assets to support local job creation
- The most significant investment in public transportation in the region in decades, the GRTC Pulse Bus Rapid Transit service which is on schedule to launch in fall of 2017
- Major economic development deals with long-term positive implications for job creation involving Stone Brewing and the Richmond Maritime Terminal (Port of Richmond)
- Significant collaborative partnerships with Richmond Public Schools and community stakeholders focused on systemic improvements to early childhood education, with grant support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, as well as the launch of the RVA Reads program promoting early literacy in Pre-K classrooms
- The launch of a new initiative providing high-quality out-of-school time support to adolescents in the City of Richmond, NextUp RVA
- The launch of a career and college readiness initiative, RVA Future, which has established Future Centers in all five comprehensive high schools, with the future aim of evolving into a Promise Scholarship initiative
- The establishment of the Good Neighbor Initiative in the City's six large public housing communities in partnership with Richmond City Health District and the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority

**The residents of the City of Richmond recognize that continuing to tolerate a status quo in which one in four residents and two in five children live in poverty is unacceptable. The work of the Office of Community Wealth Building, in partnership with other stakeholders, offers a framework for not only conceptualizing but executing systemic change, for the benefit of all City residents.**



## OFFICE OF COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING

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- The first group of major projects funded by the City's Affordable Housing Trust Fund, expected to lead the development or rehabilitation of nearly 200 units of affordable housing
- Ongoing work in support of the redevelopment of Creighton Court in accord with the principles of the federal Choice Neighborhood Initiative, including a commitment to one-for-one replacement of public housing units
- The establishment of the Office of Community Wealth Building as a permanent City agency charged with coordination of the poverty reduction initiative, reporting directly to the City's Chief Administrative Officer
- The publication by the Office of Community Wealth Building of a system of metrics and its first annual report, delivered to City Council on February 22, 2016

The residents of the City of Richmond recognize that continuing to tolerate a status quo in which one in four residents and two in five children live in poverty is unacceptable. The work of the Office of Community Wealth Building, in partnership with other stakeholders, offers a framework for not only conceptualizing but executing systemic change, for the benefit of all City residents.

# POVERTY RATE IN CITY OF RICHMOND & IMPACT ON FISCAL HEALTH

The most authoritative and reliable source for poverty levels is the American Community Survey (ACS) published by the U.S. Census Bureau. Estimates of poverty levels for the previous calendar year are released in the fall of each year. The five-year ACS estimates are considered the most reliable indicator since they have a larger sample size and lower margin of error than the annual estimates. Table 1 presents both the current five-year estimate and the current one-year estimate of poverty and child poverty, as well as the corresponding estimates of the total number of persons in each category. The poverty rate and number of persons in poverty is also calculated according to an alternative measure excluding college undergraduates. For the purposes of this report, the current five-year estimates are treated as authoritative.

**Table 1. Poverty and Child Poverty in City of Richmond**

Current Five-Year Estimate (2010-2014)					
Poverty Rate	Child Poverty Rate	# Persons in Poverty	# Children in Poverty	Poverty Rate Excluding College Undergraduates	# Persons in Poverty Excluding College Undergraduates
<b>25.5%</b>	<b>39.5%</b>	<b>51,295</b>	<b>15,101</b>	<b>23.4%</b>	<b>43,371</b>

Source: American Community Survey, 2010-2014 and 2014, Tables S-17001 and B-14006.

Note: The Federal Poverty threshold for a family of four in 2014 was \$12,316 for a single adult under age 65, \$19,073 for a single parent household with two children, and \$24,008 for a two parent household with two children. Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Table 1 shows that the current poverty level in the City of Richmond (five-year estimate) is 25.5% for all persons, including nearly 40% for children. Evidence from the 2014 one-year estimates indicates that the overall poverty rate may be falling; however this appears to represent the impact of the City’s population growth rather than a decline in the number of persons in poverty. Both sets of figures show tangible improvement since the 2008-12 five-year estimates, when the negative impact of the Great Recession of 2008 on poverty reached its peak.





## Impact on Fiscal Health

Richmond's high poverty rate negatively impacts the City's long-term fiscal health in several ways. These include:

- Greater need for and demand for emergency and crisis services. (Example: the City's cold weather overflow shelter.)
- Decreased revenue, including property ownership (local real estate tax), vehicle ownership (personal property tax), the meals tax, the admissions tax, and other locally applied tax measures.
- High per-pupil expenditures by Richmond Public Schools to offset the impact of poverty on classroom learning compared to other Virginia localities.
- Long term fiscal stress contributes to lack of investment in infrastructure in Richmond's high-poverty neighborhoods, including roads, public spaces, parks and recreational facilities, and school buildings. Aging school building infrastructure, for instance, leads to higher year-to-year operating and maintenance costs.
- Low rates of educational attainment compared to other localities also impact the City's ability to grow, attract, and retain businesses, with negative implications for the tax base.

In the most recent assessments of the City's overall financial condition, all three bond rating agencies cited poverty and the City's socioeconomic profile as an ongoing challenge, and two agencies also credited the City's efforts to impact poverty as a positive development.

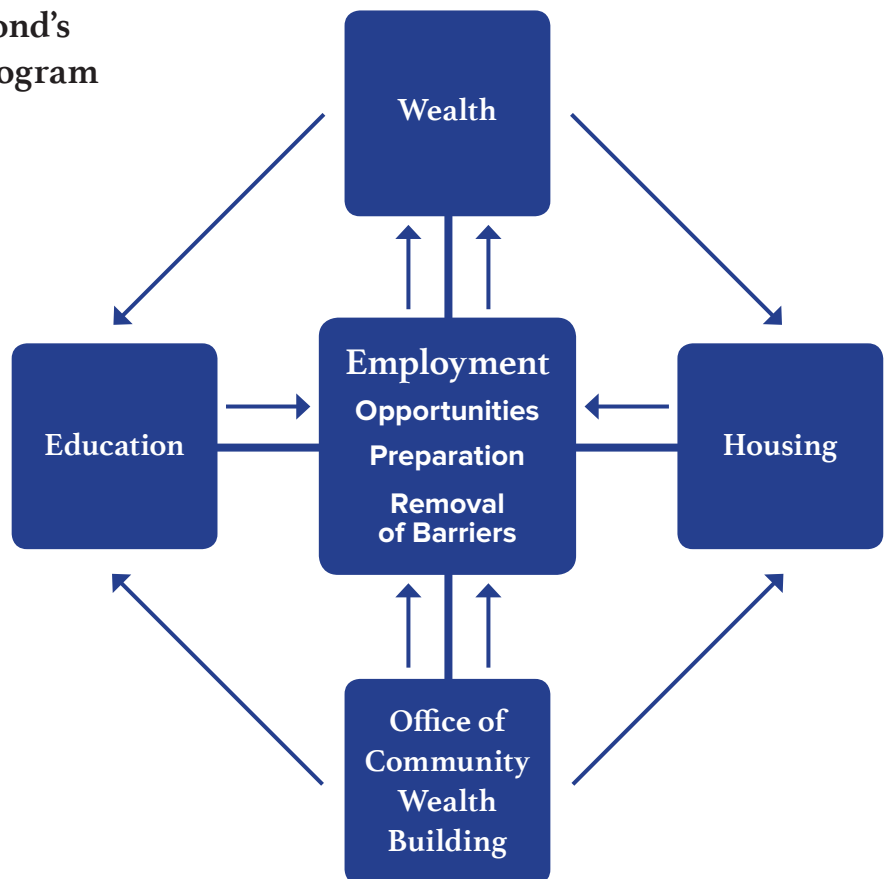
# COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING AS POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY

## Strategic Overview

Richmond’s community wealth building initiative recognizes that poverty is a function of inadequate income, and that sustained full-time employment at a decent wage is the best antidote to poverty. Developing more effective mechanisms to connect under-employed residents to existing job opportunities, as well as creating more job opportunities accessible to high-poverty neighborhoods, must be at the core of an effective poverty-fighting strategy. However, success in employment is closely linked to preparation through education, as well as the removal of common barriers under-employed residents face such as inadequate transportation and inadequate access to child care. Both access to quality employment and educational success, in turn, are deeply impacted by the dense concentration of poverty present in Richmond, particularly in and around the City’s major public housing communities.

Richmond’s community wealth building program aims at both short term and long term goals. In the shorter term, the City can most immediately impact poverty by connecting residents to quality employment opportunities and preparing them to succeed in such opportunities. In the longer term, the City needs to dramatically improve educational outcomes and also improve the neighborhood and housing environment of our most concentrated areas of poverty. Success in the short-term work of expanding employment will facilitate the achievement of substantial long-term improvements in education and in housing.

**Figure 1. Overall logic of Richmond’s Community Wealth Building program**





Employment (including self-employment) is the principal mechanism for building household wealth. Success in employment requires access to opportunity, preparation to succeed, and removal of barriers to success. Education impacts preparation and ability to compete for jobs; housing and neighborhood environment impact access to jobs (via transportation and social networks). Increases in community wealth resulting from stronger employment in turn will positively impact both education and housing in Richmond, creating a virtuous community wealth building cycle. The Office of Community Wealth Building is driving improvement in all three major policy areas: employment, education, and housing.

## Goals and Strategy

The City of Richmond has set the following long-term goals for poverty reduction:

- Reduce the number of residents living in poverty in the City of Richmond by 40% overall by 2030, relative to 2014 benchmark (excluding college students)
- Reduce the number of children living in poverty by 50% by 2030 relative to 2014 benchmark

**The City of Richmond has set the following long-term goals for poverty reduction:**

- **Reduce the number of residents living in poverty in the City of Richmond by 40% overall by 2030**
- **Reduce the number of children living in poverty by 50% by 2030**

**These goals can be logically achieved three ways:**

- **Mechanism 1: People now below the poverty line in Richmond climb out of poverty (attain higher household incomes) at a faster rate than people now above the poverty line fall beneath it (see reduction in household incomes)**
- **Mechanism 2: Persons living in Richmond in poverty exit the City at a faster rate than people in poverty from other jurisdictions move to the City**
- **Mechanism 3: The number of children born to residents in poverty falls over time (i.e. the birth rate for persons in poverty declines)**

The City has little ability to impact Mechanism 2 (entry and exit of residents). Public education and public health efforts to continue to reduce teen pregnancy rates are of critical importance (Mechanism 3), but serious efforts to strengthen families must also include a focus on connecting parents to steady employment.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Public health and education strategies to educate young people about reproductive health including the costs of early parenthood should be distinguished from coercive approaches that imply that low-income citizens do not have a right to bear children.

# COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING AS POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY

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Consequently, most of the “action” in poverty reduction must focus on Mechanism 1:

*Lifting persons above the poverty line at a faster rate than people above the line fall below it.*

Currently, leaving aside college students, there are about 43,400 people below the federal poverty line in Richmond, and an estimated 32,000 people (again excluding college students) between 100% and 200% of the federal poverty line.

The City and other stakeholders should work to implement policies aimed at the full range of this population (approximately 76,000 persons). Importantly, it may often be easier and less costly to enact policies to bolster the security of persons who are at or slightly above the federal poverty line than to raise families in deep poverty above the line.<sup>2</sup>

**For adults below the poverty line, the primary strategy for increasing income must be expanded employment. Here we might think of three groups:**

- **Group 1:** Those who are already working to some degree or are prepared to work immediately
- **Group 2:** Those who might be capable of working with assistance and proper supports
- **Group 3:** Those who are unlikely ever to become economically self-sufficient

**Group 1** consists of persons transitioning to full-time employment for those who are working part-time or part-year (a group totaling nearly 15,000 residents in poverty in Richmond) or who are unemployed but fully prepared to work. This will often require:

- Connections to better employment opportunities
- Making training programs available to allow persons to access such opportunities
- Providing career counseling support to develop long-term plans tailored to specific circumstances
- Providing assistance with transportation and child care to counter the rising costs associated with going to work
- Providing nonfinancial support and a wider array of social connections beyond immediate context

<sup>3</sup> Such policies might include: Financial education and low-cost banking services; strong public services, especially programming for children; reducing costs associated with working by better and more plentiful child care and transportation; creating more affordable housing to reduce the housing burden on households with modest incomes; creation of more “living wage” jobs (\$15/hr total compensation or greater); creation of a stronger real-time job bank to connect qualified job-seekers to suitable opportunities; career/job counselors to work with residents who may be employed currently but seek greater security/income; policy changes to reduce the cliff effect (loss of benefits as income increases).



- Provision of more living wage jobs in the geographic community
- Financial education/banking services assistance

**Group 2** consists of persons who have not been in the labor market for some time, or ever. This group may often require:

- Basic remedial education (literacy)
- GED or other high school diploma classes
- Training programs to connect to identified available opportunities
- Intensive case management and development of long-term household plans
- Assistance with transportation, child care to counter the rising costs associated with going to work
- Opportunities for part-time work or entry-level work that could be stepping stones to full-time employment
- Financial education/banking services assistance

**Group 3** consists of persons who have long-term challenges that make it unlikely they will ever be able to be self-sufficient. Persons in this group may suffer from physical disabilities, mental or emotional disabilities, depression or other mental health issues, substance abuse, and so on. For this group primary goals should include:

- Proper diagnosis
- Safety and meeting of basic needs
- Access to appropriate care services
- For those who are able, provision of meaningful opportunities to contribute to the community via paid or unpaid (volunteer) activities
- For those who are able, transition into more ambitious employment activities

All groups require the following basic services:

- Health insurance and care
- Appropriate information about care and education of their children



# COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING AS POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY

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- Access to zero or low-cost recreational and artistic activities and other activities that enhance quality-of-life
- Meaningful connections with other residents
- Food and housing security
- Safety

Generally speaking, Group 3 will require the most intensive set of resources to provide basic levels of care and support. Long-term economic self-sufficiency may not be a realistic goal for many persons in group 3. For that group, the most appropriate goals are 1) meeting needs of adults to facilitate maximum possible development and engagement and 2) providing high levels of support to children in families with one or more adults in this category so that the children might have a realistic chance of being successful.

To substantially reduce poverty, the City of Richmond must assist as many families as possible in achieving lasting economic stability. The achievement and sustenance of economic stability involves more than just individuals obtaining a paycheck. Human beings have multiple needs—for health, for community affiliation and connection, for stable family support, as well as for day-to-day supports. A crisis in any of these areas can undermine or destroy the capacity of an individual to sustain steady employment. Further, most persons are members of a larger household or family unit, and a crisis experienced by one member of the unit can easily impact the ability of all household members to thrive.

Consequently, in measuring and assessing progress in lifting households out of poverty, it is important to not simply track earned income, but to employ a holistic assessment tool. The following chart, adopted from the HUD Self-Sufficiency Index, illustrates a holistic approach in which several domains (employment, health, housing, education and career plan) are ranked on a continuum ranging from “In Crisis” to “Thriving.” The Office of Community Wealth Building’s BLISS program, initiated in 2015, utilizes a more detailed version of this index, tracking wellness across eighteen domains.



**Figure 2. From Crisis to Thriving: The Pathway out of Poverty**

In Crisis	At Risk	Safe	Stable	Thriving
<p>No Income or assets</p> <p>No skills or credentials</p> <p>Homeless or unstable housing</p> <p>No or unreliable transportation or child care.</p> <p>Safety and mental health risks are high</p> <p>Addictions and/or Legal Problems</p>	<p>Seeking job or temp/seasonal job or other legal income</p> <p>Temporary or transitional housing</p> <p>Transportation and child care available, but not affordable or reliable</p> <p>Seeking GED or vocational training</p>	<p>Employed in semi-stable job</p> <p>Housing is stable and is affordable (maybe with subsidy)</p> <p>Transportation and child care are generally reliable and affordable</p> <p>Has high school diploma, GED, or vocational training</p>	<p>Permanent &amp; stable job paying living wage</p> <p>Housing is stable &amp; and is affordable without subsidy</p> <p>Transportation and child care are reliable and affordable</p> <p>Career &amp; educational plan in place; active &amp; ongoing learning</p>	<p>Permanent, stable employment sufficient to build assets</p> <p>Housing is permanent &amp; affordable without subsidy</p> <p>Transportation and child care are reliable and affordable</p> <p>Education and career plan being implemented</p>

Helping families obtain and sustain quality employment will have the most direct, immediate impact on reducing the number of persons (adults and children) in poverty in the City. In the long term, improvements in education and housing environments are also essential both to impacting employment as well as to expanding pathways for upward social mobility for young people growing up in or near poverty in the City.

The following sections of the report provide a narrative description of steps the City is taking to implement this agenda, focused on the three core buckets of employment, education and housing.

# EMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES

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The City of Richmond's efforts with respect to employment fall into three broad categories: connecting residents to employment opportunities while addressing barriers to success; developing new quality employment opportunities accessible to low-income City residents through targeted economic development; and expanding access to employment opportunities in the region through improved transportation. This section provides further detail on the component parts of each strategy.

## Workforce Development Strategies

### ***Center for Workforce Innovation: Connecting Residents to Jobs***

Expanding and strengthening pathways by which residents may prepare for, obtain and sustain employment must be the central component of the City's poverty reduction efforts.

In 2011, the City launched a new locally-funded program, the Center for Workforce Innovation (CWI), with the aim of building pathways to employment meeting the specific needs of under-employed City residents. In 2013, the Center for Workforce Innovation moved into its current location at 900 E. Marshall Street, less than one block from the GRTC temporary transfer station. In 2015, the Center became a division within the newly established Office of Community Wealth Building.



**Since 2011, over 1,000 residents have received employment support through CWI, and over 600 residents have successfully obtained employment. In FY 2015, 283 persons participated in the program and 176 obtained employment, a 62% placement ratio, at an average starting wage of \$9.41. Over 130 unique employers hired participants referred by the program in FY 2015, and over 300 employers have done so since the program's inception.**

Since 2011, over 1,000 residents have received employment support through CWI, and over 600 residents have successfully obtained employment. In FY 2015, 283 persons participated in the program and 176 obtained employment, a 62% placement ratio, at an average starting wage of \$9.41. Over 130 unique employers hired participants referred by the program in FY 2015, and over 300 employers have done so since the program's inception.

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 on 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 once employment has been obtained.

### Partnerships

The Center for Workforce Innovation has established several innovative partnerships with local businesses to enhance employment opportunities and services for participants.

- A successful partnership with **Strickland Machine Company** has led to the training of 26 residents as welders. The apprentice welders produced 280 bicycle racks now visible all over the City of Richmond.
- Through a partnership with **Capital One** and **RideRichmond**, twenty CWI participants have gained access to bicycles as well as safety equipment and training. Bicycles extend the effective coverage of GRTC service in the region, and provide participants a low-cost way to access employment. Capital One also provides curricular and training support to CWI's Workforce Professionals class.
- Through a new initiative funded by United Way, CWI staff are partnering with the **Local Initiatives Support Corporation** (LISC) and the **Neighborhood Resource Center** to pilot a new program, **Fulton Thrives**, to provide workforce support as well as financial literacy training to up to 20 low or moderate income residents of the Fulton community. Participants will, upon completion of initial training and the development of an individualized plan, gain access to a \$1,400 stipend to support progress towards self-sufficiency.
- CWI staff are working closely with **Stone Brewing** to inform and prepare potential job candidates for future job openings at Stone. A job fair sponsored by Stone Brewing with support from CWI on Tuesday January 19 at the Powhatan Community Center attracted approximately 1,000 job seekers.



### What's Next ?

In the next stage of development, the City's workforce efforts will have the following focal points:

- Developing strong, in-depth relationships with major employers in the City as part of a strategy to expand the numbers served through workforce efforts.

# EMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES

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- Collaborating with the regional Workforce Investment Board to maximize efficient use of available resources in order to expand the numbers served.
- Collaborating with Richmond Public Schools and other local workforce providers to improve alignment and user-friendliness of workforce services operating in the City of Richmond.
- Expanding job networks and workforce development services directly into high-poverty neighborhoods in the City.
- Strengthening the wrap-around support services available to program participants.
- Continuing to align the City’s workforce efforts with closely related poverty reduction initiatives, such as Social Enterprise Development and the East End Transformation Process.

The long-term goal of the Center for Workforce Innovation is to build the capacity to serve 1,000 residents a year while sustaining a placement rate of at least 50% (500 persons a year). In addition, CWI seeks to play an integral role in the development of a stronger network of workforce providers serving Richmond residents, with the goal of building a collective capacity to move at least 1,000 adults a year into full-time employment.

## ***BLISS: Building Lives to Independence and Self-Sufficiency***

A central recommendation of the Maggie L. Walker Initiative for Expanding Opportunity and Fighting Poverty was to build upon the City’s emerging workforce efforts in two ways:

- Devoting targeted resources to address common barriers to employment such as inadequate transportation and access to child care; and
- Adopting a holistic approach to service delivery focusing on the family unit as a whole.



**In the pilot year (2015), eighteen families, including a total of 24 adults and 70 persons, all of whom are residents of Richmond Redevelopment & Housing Authority properties or RRHA voucher recipients, successfully participated in the program. The families are diverse with respect to family structure, native language, age of head of household, and employment experience.**

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.

In the pilot year (2015), eighteen families, including a total of 24 adults and 70 persons, all of whom are residents of Richmond Redevelopment & Housing Authority properties or RRHA voucher recipients, successfully participated in the program. The families are diverse with respect to family structure, native language, age of head of household, and employment experience.

**Figure 3. Wellness Domains Measured by the BLISS Program**

	In Crisis	At Risk	Safe	Stable	Thriving
Housing					
Employment					
Income					
Food					
Child Care					
Children’s Education					
Adult Education					
Health Care					
Life Skills					
Family Social Relations					
Transportation					
Community Involvement					
Parenting Skills					
Legal Status					
Disability Status					
Mental Health					
Substance Abuse					
Safety					

# EMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES

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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)
- Placement of children in high quality child care via VCU Health Systems
- Enrollment of eligible children 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 16 of 18 families; BLISS case managers helped secure employment for ten participating families and quality child care for eight families; one participating family achieved its goal of moving from RRHA into a better housing environment. BLISS staff work collaboratively with RRHA staff to identify eligible families who would be a strong fit for the program. After an initial assessment of family well-being according to the 18 domains, each family's progress and well-being is re-assessed quarterly.

## **As of January 31, 2016:**

- **18 families and 70 people total participate in the BLISS program**
- **89% of BLISS families are employed (16 out of 18 families)**
- **89% have made strides toward the goal of moving to “Thriving” by obtaining employment and pursuing education**
- **56% found employment with the help of BLISS (others came into program employed)**
- **72% have completed Virginia Individual Development Account financial literacy training (preparing participants for homeownership).**



## What's Next ?

In 2016, the BLISS program will expand to serve at least 35 families. In addition, the BLISS holistic methodology will be adapted and applied in two additional initiatives: The Gilpin Court Early Childhood Pilot slated to launch in spring 2016 and, subject to funding availability, the Creighton Court public housing redevelopment program. In each case, the goal is to engage families in a process of moving towards long-term self-sufficiency, using a holistic approach.

The goal of the BLISS program is to help families achieve long-term economic self-sufficiency.

## Job Creation Strategies

Workforce development focuses on preparing residents for employment, connecting residents to existing employment opportunities, and providing supportive services to assist residents in successfully sustaining employment and advancing towards their long-term economic and career goals. A complementary community wealth building strategy focuses on targeted job creation—the development of more jobs immediately accessible to persons and neighborhoods of poverty.

### *Major Employer Development*

A critical component of targeted job creation is assuring that larger economic development projects involving the location, expansion, or retention of significantly-sized firms are connected to the local workforce system, so that residents in poverty may access a substantial share of resultant employment opportunities.

The Mayor's Anti-Poverty Commission recommended that the City work towards recruitment of one or more major employers capable of bringing hundreds of jobs to the City, accessible to low-income City residents.

The **Stone Brewing** project is of particular interest due to its high visibility and because of the tangible City support provided to the

The Mayor's Anti-Poverty Commission recommended that the City work towards recruitment of one or more major employers capable of bringing hundreds of jobs to the City, accessible to low-income City residents.



project (a \$2 million grant spread over six years and a \$23 million long-term loan). The City's performance agreement with Stone commits Stone to provide 90 or more production jobs at average total compensation of \$57,024 or greater, as well as 198 non-production jobs at average wage of \$13.86/hr (total compensation) or higher. Stone also committed to at least \$73.7 million in capital expenditures. The City is entitled to pro-rated repayment of

# EMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES

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grants associated with the project if Stone fails to meet at least 80% of the job targets and 90% of the capital investment targets by the end of the grant period.

Stone Brewing has held several workforce events in collaboration with the Center for Workforce Innovation, including information sessions and a jobs fair in January 2016 that attracted approximately 1,000 persons.

Importantly, the City also took a major step forward in October 2015 by entering into a long-term operating lease on the **Richmond Marine Terminal (Port of Richmond)** with the Port of Virginia. This long-term arrangement will facilitate infrastructure investment and job creation in the Marine Terminal and surrounding area over the next decade and beyond. City staff will participate in a task force convened by the ChamberRVA to develop a workforce pipeline to fill jobs created at or near the Richmond Marine Terminal in coming years.



## **Social Enterprise**

A “social enterprise” is a nonprofit, for-profit, or worker-owned firm that seeks to advance a social mission while remaining economically viable and self-supporting.

Social Enterprise Development involves developing, nurturing and expanding firms of small, medium or potentially large size that are specifically geared towards hiring persons out of poverty and, often, contributing to the stabilization and development of emerging neighborhoods marked by high poverty.

A “social enterprise” is a nonprofit, for-profit, or worker-owned firm that seeks to advance a social mission while remaining economically viable and self-supporting. In the Richmond context, the specific social mission to be advanced is reducing poverty and building community wealth, while meeting local social needs. The ideal social enterprise in Richmond’s

context addresses an unmet community need while employing local persons to do the work and providing training, ownership, or advancement opportunities to those being employed.

The work plan of the Maggie L. Walker Initiative called for the development of a social enterprise strategy for Richmond based loosely on an anchor institution-based model of social enterprise development that has emerged in the past decade in Cleveland, Ohio and several other cities. Anchor institutions are major



employers whose identity is permanently or strongly tied to the City, such as universities and hospitals. The concept is straightforward: collaborate with major anchor institutions within the City to leverage the procurement power of these institutions to support the development of new social enterprises. For instance, if local hospitals and universities can project a demand for a given good or service over the next several years, social enterprise firms might be launched or expanded to meet those needs.

To advance this initiative, two steps were taken in 2015. First, the City hired its first ever Social Enterprise Specialist, Ms. Evette Roots, who is a staff member of the Office of Community Wealth Building and also part of the Office of Minority Business Development team. Ms. Roots is charged with leading development of the City's social enterprise sector, working collaboratively with existing social entrepreneurs and supporters within the City to identify opportunities for launching new businesses.

Second, the City contracted with Democracy Collaborative, a nationally known nonprofit organization that played a pivotal role in the development of Cleveland's social enterprise model, and ReeSources, Inc., an Henrico-based firm, to conduct a detailed assessment and provide concrete recommendations for the launch of two or more social enterprises in Richmond by the end of FY 2017, with the potential of employing at least 50 residents. The final project report, including recommendations, is due in May 2016, and will be known as the Richmond Social Enterprise Strategic Plan.

**The work plan of the Maggie L. Walker Initiative called for the development of a social enterprise strategy for Richmond.**

## What's Next ?

In 2016, the Office of Community Wealth Building has four major priorities with respect to social enterprise development.

- In collaboration with other community partners, lead the initial implementation of the priority recommendations of the Social Enterprise Strategic Plan.
- Launch programming in the Conrad Center on Oliver Hill Way, recently acquired by the City of Richmond, to provide job training services to residents and potentially develop a social enterprise model for operation of the Center.
- Development of a business services "hub" to support the needs of emerging social enterprises and other small businesses, in conjunction with the Office of Minority Business Development. Many smaller firms lack the backroom capacity to be regularly competitive for procurement opportunities; the planned business service hub will help close that gap.
- Develop and implement a training curriculum, or partner with other organizations to provide such training, to emerging local social entrepreneurs. This training will focus on both the basic mechanics of operating a sustainable business or nonprofit organization as well as the specific challenges faced by social enterprises.



# EMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES

## Employment Access: Transportation

A 2011 Brookings Institution study, “Missed Opportunity: Transit and Jobs in Metropolitan America,” rated Richmond as 92nd out of the top 100 metropolitan areas in overall transit accessibility.

The Richmond metropolitan area is one of the largest in the United States not to be served by an effective regional transit service to allow residents to access employment and commercial opportunities outside their residential jurisdiction. A 2011 Brookings Institution study, “Missed Opportunity: Transit and Jobs in Metropolitan America,” rated Richmond as 92nd out of the top 100 metropolitan areas in overall transit accessibility.

Discussions about regional transit in Richmond must be placed in a historical context. Advocacy groups and some business leaders have called for a regional transit system for Richmond since the 1980s, but efforts to establish a permanent, cross-jurisdictional bus service through the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s persistently stalled. While there have been some examples of routes running into Henrico and Chester-

field County on a trial or permanent basis, a regional system is still lacking.

The Bus Rapid Transit concept has changed the conversation in Richmond by introducing a cost effective way to expand service with more rapid travel times than conventional buses, allowing for fast, efficient, and convenient service to both existing transit users and new users. The GRTC Pulse, also known as the Broad Street Bus Rapid Transit project, is the first step in a long-term effort to build a regional system. The Pulse will encompass 14 stations from Willow Lawn in Henrico County to Rocketts Landing in Fulton. Riders in neighborhoods not directly served through BRT will also benefit—it is estimated, for instance, that riders from Whitcomb Court and Fairfield Court will save 23 and 26 minutes, respectively, on travel to Willow Lawn per peak travel time trip.<sup>3</sup>

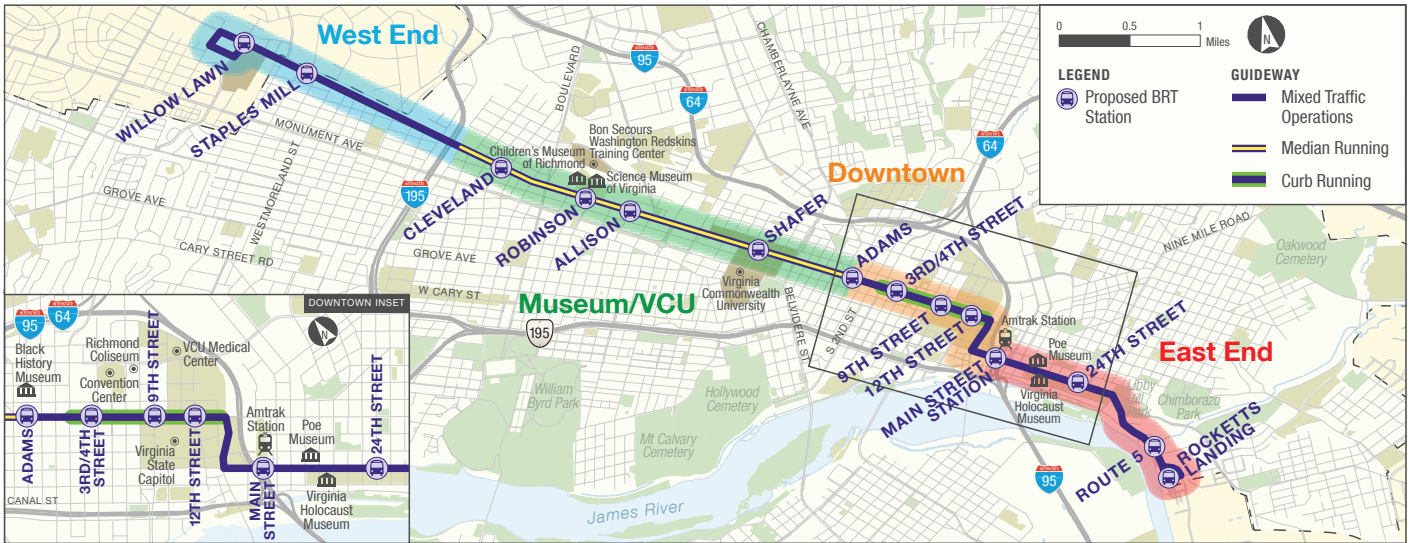


The eastbound route of the GRTC Pulse starts on Broad Street at Willow Lawn before shifting southward to Main Street eastward to Rocketts Landing. This route will allow direct connections to many existing GRTC routes, including all current routes which connect to the temporary transfer station at 9th and Marshall Street. To assure that the project enhances connectivity for residents in the East End—both Church Hill and Fulton—the City of Richmond in 2014 provided fund-

ing to GRTC for a study to identify how BRT will intersect with existing GRTC routes citywide and to identify potential connecting routes from BRT stops to Church Hill and to the Fulton neighborhood. This study was conducted by GRTC’s subcontractor Nelson/Nygaard Consulting Associates in 2015 and presented to the public in a series of public meetings in January 2016.

**The GRTC Pulse, also known as the Broad Street Bus Rapid Transit project, is the first step in a long-term effort to build a regional system.**

<sup>3</sup> See [http://www.ridegrtc.com/media/main/GRTC\\_East\\_End\\_Route\\_Modifications\\_Recommendations\\_1\\_19\\_v1.pdf](http://www.ridegrtc.com/media/main/GRTC_East_End_Route_Modifications_Recommendations_1_19_v1.pdf), pp. 20-21.



It is important to recognize that these initial studies are intended simply to identify immediate steps needed to make GRTC functionally successful when service launches in fall of 2017. The City of Richmond and GRTC, with support from the Commonwealth of Virginia, also will be conducting a more comprehensive assessment of how the GRTC Pulse and the BRT concept should impact the entire design of the GRTC system. That study will be undertaken this year and is projected to be complete by January 2017.

On February 8, 2016, City Council voted to authorize the CAO to enter an operating agreement with GRTC. The GRTC Pulse is expected to begin service in fall 2017.



# EDUCATION STRATEGIES

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**The most critical element in preparing residents for employment (including self-employment) is a quality education.**

Quality employment is the primary path out of poverty for Richmond families. The most critical element in preparing residents for employment (including self-employment) is a quality education. The likelihood of an individual living in poverty is directly connected to the individual's educational attainment. Just as important is assuring that students who do receive diplomas are in fact adequately prepared for work or further education, and are directly connected to educational and career tracks.

What is true for individual students is also true for the community as a whole. Localities with a reputation for strong public schools find it easier to attract and retain employers (who need access to a steady stream of qualified employees) and residents (who want to be able to send their children to quality public schools).

The City of Richmond has for too long suffered from inadequate educational outcomes. Richmond regularly ranks near the bottom of statewide statistics in nearly every major educational metric, from graduation rates to number of schools fully accredited. Richmond's poor results are to a large degree a predictable byproduct of high levels of poverty and especially concentrated poverty. Classrooms with a high number of children with severe needs are more challenging to teach, schools with a high level of poverty are more challenging to lead, and school systems with entrenched poverty will find it more difficult to attract and retain outstanding principals and teachers.

No fair assessment of Richmond's educational performance can overlook the pervasive impact of poverty. But poverty cannot be used as an excuse or justification for not seeking to do much better as a community. Even controlling for economic disadvantage and other demographic factors, Richmond schools under-perform on many indicators compared to the statewide average.

Ultimately, turning under-performing schools around is a community responsibility. Successfully increasing employment and economic stability for thousands of parents of Richmond Public Schools students, by connecting parents to more stable employment, would be a major contribution to the academic and social development of those parents' children, and hence RPS as a whole. But we also must look at ways to directly impact the educational process and students' lives, especially in areas where there are major unmet needs.

In our system, Richmond Public Schools has responsibility for management and operation of the City's schools. These responsibilities include critical matters such as curriculum and instruction, personnel and staffing, facility maintenance and overall operations. Richmond School Board establishes policy direction and hires the Superintendent of schools, and the Superintendent leads the administration of school operations. Richmond City Council, in turn, is responsible for authorizing the local contribution to the schools' budget, which year in and year out is the largest single line item in the overall City budget.

The focus of first the Mayor's Anti-Poverty Commission and then the Office of Community Wealth Building with respect to education has been to identify and focus work on those important areas which clearly impact RPS students and outcomes, but are not the sole responsibility of Richmond Public Schools.



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**

The Office of Community Wealth Building has forged extensive partnerships with Richmond Public Schools and with numerous community organizations to address these needs. The following section provides a brief synopsis of work undertaken in each area.

### ***Early Childhood Education***

There is now a national consensus that serious efforts to address both poverty and educational inequity must focus attention on the early childhood years. School attendance is not compulsory until age five, and publicly funded preschool programs are not available until at the earliest age three (age four for most students in Virginia). During these earliest years prior to school, children's brains go through a rapid period of development in response to interaction with parents and the environment around them. There is overwhelming scholarly documentation of the ways in which low-income children often are deprived of the kinds of interactions and environments that stimulate the learning of language and healthy development. At the same time, low-income children are more likely to be exposed to severe stressors which can negatively impact critical cognitive skills such as the ability to focus attentively on a task and short-term memory capacity. In Richmond, these national trends are manifest in the fact that approximately 23% of Richmond kindergarteners fail the PALS readiness for learning assessment upon entering school—a number roughly twice the state average. Having started off behind, many students never catch up.

**During these earliest years prior to school, children's brains go through a rapid period of development in response to interaction with parents and the environment around them.**

**Early childhood education in Richmond has long been a space with multiple providers and players, without a sufficiently robust institutional framework to support collaboration and the setting of community-wide strategic goals.**

Finally, it should be recognized that early childhood education in Richmond has long been a space with multiple providers and players, without a sufficiently robust institutional framework to support collaboration and the setting of community-wide strategic goals.



# EDUCATION STRATEGIES

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To address all these concerns, the Office of Community Wealth Building began work with Richmond Public Schools and other community partners on a new approach to early childhood collaboration in Richmond in August 2014. The recommendations of that initial task force produced four concrete results:

- The formation of the **Richmond Early Childhood Cabinet**. The Cabinet 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 side. This team meets monthly to share information and identify opportunities for collaboration, including developing a strategic “Road Map to Kindergarten” for improving early childhood education in Richmond. The Cabinet began meeting in April 2015.
- The establishment of the **Richmond Early Childhood Action Council**, which formally kicked off in September 2015. 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 Smart Beginnings Greater Richmond, 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.
- In May 2015, the **W.K. Kellogg Foundation** of Battle Creek, Michigan, one of the nation’s largest philanthropic foundations, awarded the City of Richmond a \$300,000 grant to build on this collaborative early childhood work. These funds are being used to staff the work of the Richmond Early Childhood Cabinet and Action Council including 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 aimed at identifying specific access barriers faced by low-income parents with young children citywide.
- In spring 2015, the **RVA Reads** program was launched on a pilot basis. RVA Reads is a collaboration between Richmond Public Library, Richmond Public Schools, and the Office of Community Wealth Building, drawing on dedicated funds for anti-poverty initiatives from the FY2015 budget. The program involves monthly readings of children’s books by parents and volunteers in the City’s preschool centers. Copies of each book read are distributed to each child each month. Each book also comes with reading tips to encourage home reading by parents with their





children. After operating in the last three months of the 2014-15 school year at three sites, in 2015-16 the program has expanded as a yearlong initiative operating not only in the four preschool centers (now including MLK Preschool Learning Center which opened this year) but also in the additional community sites. Over 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.



### **NextUp RVA**



Improving middle school performance is a critical strategic goal for Richmond Public Schools and the City of Richmond. Test score performance in the City's middle schools in recent years has been dismal, with a much wider gap between RPS average performance and state benchmarks than is evident at the elementary school level. The academic, social and disciplinary issues so many Richmond students experience in

early adolescence can literally have lifelong consequences; problems at the middle school level often predict either dropping out or major difficulties at the high school level.

More generally, the early teen years are a time in which younger people need a proper balance of structure and freedom, and need to be encouraged to start developing their own pathways and voices. Structured enrichment programs during out-of-school-time have a key role to play in healthy child and community development. Effective programs can expose youngsters to new areas of exploration and also provide an additional layer of support to students.

**Problems at the middle school level often predict either dropping out or major difficulties at the high school level.**

NextUp RVA, a public-private partnership now in its second full year of programming, aims to provide strong support to students reinforcing positive academic and social development, while also lifting the aspirations of students by exposing them to new activities. In 2014-15, the program operated at Henderson Middle School and served a total of 130 students. The program begins after school and lasts until approximately 7 p.m. Participating students are 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 home.





# EDUCATION STRATEGIES

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**In 2014-15, 30% of Henderson’s highest-need students participated in the program. Over 80% of students reported that the program offerings were “interesting.” Students who participated consistently in the program showed improved grades and school attendance compared to students participating less consistently. For all students, the following outcomes were reported:**

- **73% of participants improved their attendance or maintained positive levels of school attendance**
- **88% of participants reduced the number of behavior incidents or maintained positive behavior**
- **57% of participants improved their grades in English**
- **51% of participants improved their grades in Math**

Pilot data evidence also showed that attendance and academic performance were higher among NextUp RVA participants than Henderson students not participating in the program, although it is not yet clear that this correlation reflects a causal relationship.

## What’s Next ?

In 2015-16, the program is continuing at Henderson Middle School and also has launched at Thomas Boushall Middle School. Through January 2016, a total of 252 students have participated in the program this academic year, 64% of whom have at least one risk or early warning factor for becoming a school dropout. In 2016-17, the program will continue at Henderson and Boushall and expand to Lucille Brown Middle School. The long-term goal is for the program to operate or provide support to high-quality, structured out-of-school time programming in all of the district’s middle schools, and to serve 40% of all middle school students, with a special focus on children with high risk factors.

A major feature of NextUp RVA is its collaborative structure, both at the school level and in 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 also co-sponsored a professional development institute in August 2015 with Richmond Public Schools for its program staff, and conducts other professional development activities through the year. The organization also has developed an extensive system of metrics and self-evaluation to assure that the effort is responsive to community needs and maintains high quality standards.

Structurally, NextUp RVA is supported by a Board of Managers consisting of major funders and supporters of the program (including City elected officials and RPS administration). The program currently has an annual budget of approximately \$2.08 million (FY 2016), including a \$350,000 contribution from the City of Rich-



mond in both FY 2015 and FY 2016. The staff are also supported by an Advisory Board consisting of service providers and other subject matter experts; the City of Richmond is represented on this Board by staff from the Office of Community Wealth Building as well as from Richmond Public Schools.

### **RVA Future**



RVA Future is the latest example of collaboration between the Office of Community Wealth Building and Richmond Public Schools, as well as with Richmond Public Schools Education Foundation and numerous community organizations.

RVA Future is a new 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, as 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 in three ways: First, by providing a dedicated space and full-time staff member in each comprehensive high school for the purpose of providing direct support and services to students as well as helping coordinate the activities of other organizations providing career and college-related services within the schools. Second, over time steadily build 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. Third, RVA Future will be 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. Promise Scholarship programs in localities nationwide have been shown to boost school enrollment as well as student outcomes.



In a broader sense, RVA Future, as with the other programs described here, aims to raise students' expectations concerning what they can accomplish and in the process contribute to positive changes in school cul-



tures. If year after year RPS students are graduating and going on to continuing education at a substantially lower level than students in 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.

# EDUCATION STRATEGIES

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RVA Future Centers launched in all five comprehensive high schools in September 2015. Key program highlights to date:

- Staffing (five site directors, one program manager) complete over summer of 2015
- Dedicated RVA Future building space identified in all five high schools
- Supplemental private funding secured to allow all five centers to open
- Development and approval of a detailed work plan for RVA Future, in coordination with RPS and other service providers. Future Centers act as hubs for college and career-related services in RPS high schools.
- Successful public kick-off event at Armstrong High School in December 2015 attended by Mayor Dwight C. Jones, Sec. Anne Holton, Superintendent Dr. Steven Staples (Commonwealth of Virginia), and RPS Superintendent Dr. Dana Bedden, December 2015.
- As of February 1, 2016, there had been nearly 2,500 student visits to the five Future Centers, including visits by 62% of seniors in the class of 2016. Over 325 seniors have completed a “Career Cruising” portfolio with the support of RVA Future staff. Other services offered include ACT and SAT registration, FAFSA completion, navigating the college application process, and searching for and applying for scholarships.
- Future Center staff also routinely assist students with application essays, scholarship essays, resumes, letters and correspondence with professionals, and with colleges and universities, coordinate college and industry tours, and make classroom presentations, among other activities.
- Tracking of FAFSA completion rates by high school has begun. Each school has a target improvement rate of at least 5% relative to 2014-15 baseline completion
- Each school also has a target improvement rate of at least 5% relative to 2014-15 baseline for 2 and 4 year college and technical school enrollment.

## *Communities in Schools of Richmond*



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

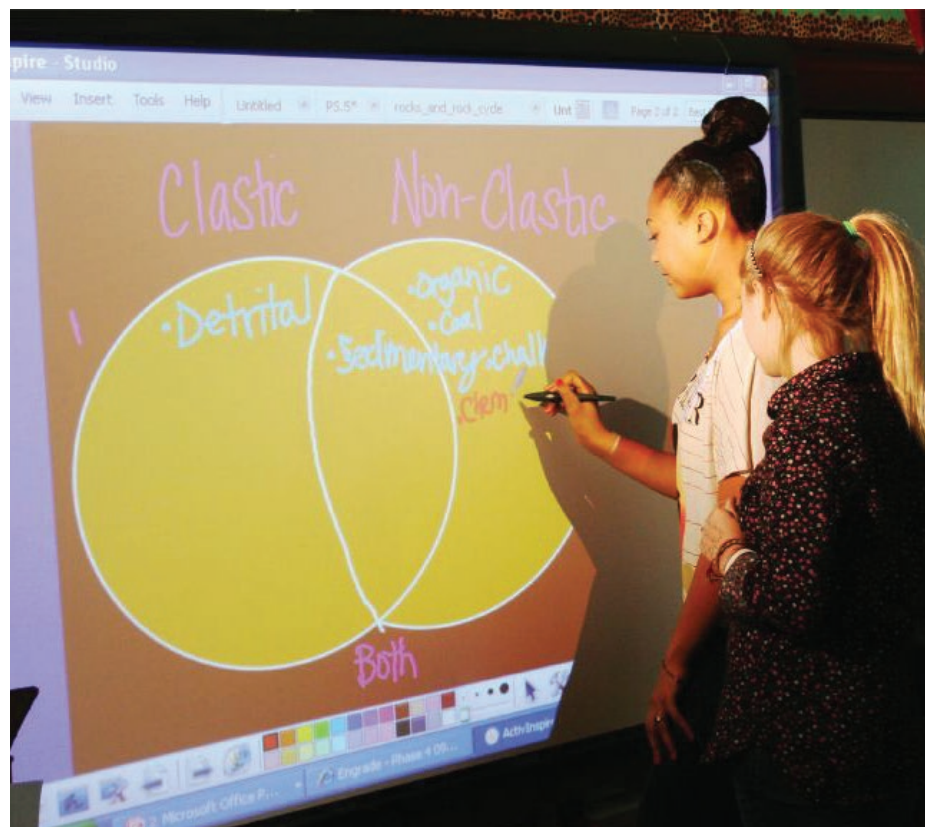


coordinator) to a total of 35 schools in the City of Richmond including seven of eight middle schools, all five comprehensive high schools, and three Performance Learning Centers (PLCs).

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 PLCs 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. 214 students graduated from Performance Learning Centers in 2014-15.

**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' 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.



During the 2015 school year, 16,402 K-12 students in RPS were connected to resources and 2,865 students received Integrated Student Supports. Among the group receiving intensive services, 61% of CIS students improved attendance; 80% of CIS students improved behavior; and 70% of CIS students improved course performance.

Because Communities in Schools touches children in Richmond at nearly every age level, the organization is an important partner in the Office of Community Wealth Building and City of Richmond's efforts to build and sustain a stronger cradle-to-career pipeline for Richmond students.



# HOUSING STRATEGIES

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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. The federal Choice Neighborhoods Initiative offers an inclusive framework to pursue redevelopment, which the City and the Richmond Redevelopment & Housing Authority are currently pursuing in conjunction with residents, community organizations and service providers in Creighton Court. 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 focused 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

### Affordable Housing Trust Fund

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.

As part of the Maggie L. Walker Initiative, \$975,000 were allocated to the fund.

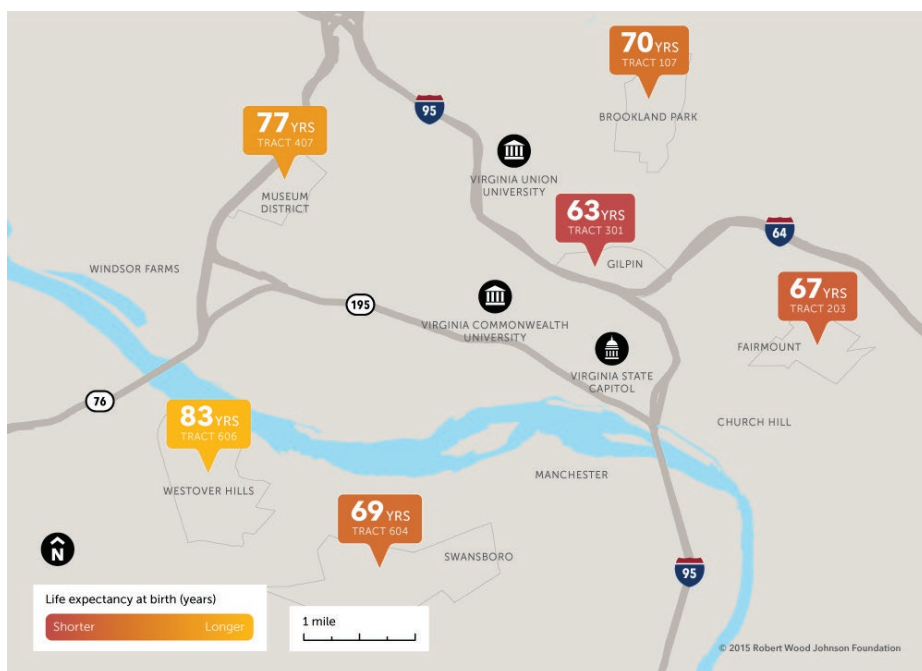
The purpose of the fund is to support the rehabilitation or construction of new affordable housing units, leveraging private project dollars. Grants through the Fund are available through a competitive application process.

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.

## 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,





# HOUSING STRATEGIES

**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.**

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.**

Via 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 provide on-site preventative-based health screenings, treatment, and education through a nurse practitioner and nurse who staff each site one day a week. 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. They also navigate residents to primary care and medical resources and follow-up to ensure the utilization of these health resources.



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

**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.**



**Good Neighbor Initiative**, and consists 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

**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.**

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.

***Creighton Court Redevelopment: The Choice Neighborhood Initiative***



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

**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.**

# HOUSING STRATEGIES



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. Average household income in Creighton Court is less than \$9,000, the poverty rate in the overall neighborhood is approximately 68%, and employment levels are far lower than the citywide average. The project as a whole would involve the development of 1,200-

1,400 units, with units both in the immediate neighborhood and scattered across the City and potentially region. Funding for the complete project is being sought through the federal Choice Neighborhoods Initiative. Already funding has been secured for phase one of the redevelopment, involving the construction of 105 new housing units on the site of the old Armstrong High School. Eventually 256 units will be built on the Armstrong site.

The Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI) program has several features which make it distinct from many previous public housing redevelopment initiatives, in particular the HOPE VI program of the 1990s. The website of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) offers this overview:

***“Choice Neighborhoods is focused on three core goals:***

- 1. Housing: Replace distressed public and assisted housing with high-quality mixed-income housing that is well-managed and responsive to the needs of the surrounding neighborhood;***
- 2. People: Improve educational outcomes and intergenerational mobility for youth with services and supports delivered directly to youth and their families; and***
- 3. Neighborhood: Create the conditions necessary for public and private reinvestment in distressed neighborhoods to offer the kinds of amenities and assets, including safety, good schools, and commercial activity, that are important to families’ choices about their community.***

***To achieve these core goals, communities must develop a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategy, or Transformation Plan. This Transformation Plan will become the guiding document for the revitalization of the public and/or assisted housing units, while simultaneously directing the transformation of the surrounding neighborhood and positive outcomes for families. To successfully implement the Transformation Plan, applicants will need to work with public and private agencies, organizations (including philanthropic organizations), and individuals to gather and leverage resources needed to support the financial sustainability of the plan. These efforts should build community support for and involvement in the development of the plan. Implementation Grants support those communities that have undergone a comprehensive local planning process and are ready to implement their ‘Transformation Plan’ to redevelop the neighborhood.”***



Notably, under the CNI program, applicants are required to commit to one-for-one replacement of public housing units. This means that hard units, whether in public housing or in privately-owned housing, dedicated to very low-income residents must be constructed in the area to replace all low-income housing units lost in the redevelopment process.

**This Plan will be the blueprint for engaging residents, meeting residents' specific needs, utilizing the resources of community partners, and assembling additional resources for this effort-- whether or not Richmond receives major federal funding for this project. In addition this Plan will be front-and-center in the overall project.**

For the past two years, the City of Richmond and RRHA have worked together to assemble this Transformation Plan. 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. Effort is also underway

to identify and align resources in support of all components of the project, with the aim of maximizing leverage for requested grant funds totaling \$30 million in CNI.

The primary aim of the Creighton Court revitalization project is to produce a better quality-of-life for residents, 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.

RRHA and the City of Richmond have committed to the development of a robust People Plan to meet these goals. This Plan will be the blueprint for engaging residents, meeting residents' specific needs, utilizing the resources of community partners, and assembling additional resources for this effort-- whether or not Richmond receives major federal funding for this project. In addition this Plan will be front-and-center in the overall project. This is a human services and human development plan with a physical and neighborhood development component, not a development project in which residents are an afterthought.

**Notably, under the CNI program, applicants are required to commit to one-for-one replacement of public housing units. This means that hard units, whether in public housing or in privately-owned housing, dedicated to very low-income residents must be constructed in the area to replace all low-income housing units lost in the redevelopment process.**

# TARGETS AND METRICS

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Establishing and publicizing clear targets and metrics of evaluation are essential components of sustained success in the community wealth building effort. This section articulates the major long-term goals of the initiative and introduces 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.

## 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.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The official poverty measure is a limited tool and has often been criticized for underestimating overall poverty and for the composition of its formula. (An alternative tool, the Supplementary Poverty Measure, is also published by the federal government.) However, the official poverty measure remains useful as a tool to compare broad differences between localities and to track changes over time. The poverty threshold for a family of four in 2014 was just over \$24,000 for a two parent family with two children or a one parent family with three children.





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

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 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 (which together comprise 54% of the City's revenue).

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 decline 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.<sup>5</sup>

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 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.

In ethical terms, children are often the worst victims of poverty.

Children suffer the consequences of economic deprivation, stress, and other adverse events, all of which may inhibit physical, emotional, and cognitive development.

<sup>5</sup> 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. Just under 8,000 residents—approximately 15%—of the total resident poverty population consists of college students. Consequently, we report both the total number of persons in poverty and the total number of residents in poverty excluding college students.



# TARGETS AND METRICS

**Table A. Poverty and Child Poverty in the City of Richmond, 1959-2014**

	Poverty Rate	Excluding Undergraduates	Child Poverty
1979	19.3% (40,228)	N/A	N/A
1989	20.9% (40,103)	N/A	N/A
1999	21.4% (40,185)	N/A	33.4% (14,040)
2005-09	22.1% (42,208)	N/A	35.2% (14,212)
2006-10	25.3% (48,452)	22.7% (39,916)	38.7% (14,952)
2007-11	26.3% (50,825)	23.8% (42,099)	40.5% (15,517)
2008-12	26.7% (52,260)	24.3% (43,508)	40.4% (15,548)
2009-13	25.6% (50,681)	23.1% (41,988)	38.8% (14,730)
2010-14	25.5% (51,295)	23.4% (43,371)	39.5% (15,101)

Sources: American Community Survey, Table S-1701. Historical Census Data (1959-1999) accessed at <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/census/2000/>.

The historical record shows that over the past 45 years the number of City residents in poverty has remained relatively stable, never falling below 40,000 residents. Because the City’s overall population sharply declined between 1979 and 1999, however, the poverty rate rose significantly over this period, from 19.3% to 21.4%. The poverty rate in the City remained relatively unchanged until the onset of the Great Recession beginning in 2008, rising to a peak of 26.7% in the 2008-2012 five-year Census estimate, the first estimate to take full account of the Recession’s impact. The poverty rate has receded slightly in each of the past two years, although this decline is largely a function of the City’s rising population level. The number of persons in the City living in poverty (aside from college students) in the most recent data is estimated to be 43,371.

The level of child poverty in the City also rose sharply over the course of the 2000s. In absolute terms, the number of children estimated to live in poverty has risen from 14,040 to 15,101 since the 2000 Census. In percentage terms, the child poverty rate has increased from 33.4% to 39.5%—a reflection of the fact that the number of school age children living in the City has actually declined since 2000, even though the City’s overall population has shown sharp gains over the same time period. These trends indicate that the City is still stuck in a dynamic in which families with school-age children remain reluctant to move to or remain in the City, compared to other sub-groups of the population. Increased confidence in Richmond Public Schools is clearly a key requirement in reversing that dynamic going forward.

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 definitively 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.

**It does not fall on any one initiative or even institution to bear sole responsibility for driving progress in these metrics. Success or failure in making progress 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.**

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 in making progress is rather a collective by-product of multiple institutions as well as the scale, scope and effectiveness of the resources devoted to driving improvement in each specific area.

## INTERMEDIATE METRICS

### 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 2010-2014 Census Data.

# TARGETS AND METRICS

**Table E-o. Employment Status and Poverty (persons age 16 and over), City of Richmond, 2010-14**

	Worked Full Time	Worked Part Time	Did Not Work
<b>Above Poverty Line</b>	<b>65,073</b>	<b>30,526</b>	<b>32,788</b>
<b>Below Poverty Line</b>	<b>2,172</b>	<b>14,805</b>	<b>20,408</b>
<b>% Category in Poverty</b>	<b>3.2%</b>	<b>32.7%</b>	<b>38.4%</b>

Source: American Community Survey, 2010-2014, Table S-1701. <sup>6</sup> 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.

As Table E-0 shows, 94.2% of the 37,385 City residents aged 16 or above living below the poverty line do not work full-time, year-round.

**Table E-1. Official Unemployment Rate, City of Richmond and Commonwealth of Virginia, 2010-2014**

	City of Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
<b>2010-14 Total</b>	<b>10.7%</b>	<b>6.9%</b>

Source: American Community Survey, 2010-14 Table S-2301.

**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
<b>2010-14 Total</b>	<b>40.6%</b>	<b>46.0%</b>
<b>2010-14 Male</b>	<b>44.6%</b>	<b>54.2%</b>
<b>2010-14 Female</b>	<b>37.0%</b>	<b>38.5%</b>

American Community Survey, 2010-14, Table B-17004.



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

	City of Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
<b>2010-14 Employed</b>	<b>62.5%</b>	<b>68.5%</b>
<b>2010-14 Unemployment Rate</b>	<b>11.9%</b>	<b>7.4%</b>

Source: American Community Survey, Table B-23006.

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 3.8% higher in the City compared to the Commonwealth, a gap which has remained stable since 2000. Overall unemployment is, however, significantly higher in the most recent period compared to 2000. Likewise, the employment rate of high school graduates (but no further education) in the City is 6% lower than the state wide 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 (or Equivalent) Highest Level of Educational Attainment, By Gender, Aged 25-64**

	City of Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
<b>2010-14</b>	<b>\$23,550</b>	<b>\$29,421</b>
<b>2010-14 Male</b>	<b>\$26,159</b>	<b>\$34,492</b>
<b>2010-14 Female</b>	<b>\$21,471</b>	<b>\$23,704</b>

Source: American Community Survey, Table B-20004.

# TARGETS AND METRICS

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**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
<b>2010-14</b>	<b>31.6%</b>	<b>23.7%</b>
<b>2010-14 Male</b>	<b>28.9% (10,060 persons)</b>	<b>19.8%</b>
<b>2010-14 Female</b>	<b>34.5% (11,239 persons)</b>	<b>29.0%</b>

Source: American Community Survey, Table B-200005.

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 nearly \$6,000, 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.

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

	City of Richmond	Henrico	Chesterfield
<b>2010-14</b>	<b>6,198 (3.7%)</b>	<b>1,304 (0.8%)</b>	<b>451 (0.4%)</b>

Source: American Community Survey, 2010-2014, Table S-0804.



Notes: The three core localities of the Richmond metropolitan area together have some 448,732 jobs. 37.1% of these jobs are located within the City of Richmond, and the remainder in Henrico (36.7%) and Chesterfield (26.3%). It is important to understand that nearly 49% of workers in these three jurisdictions (including 44% of Richmond workers) do not work in the same locality in which they live (American Community Survey: Table B-08007). Fewer than 2% of jobs within these jurisdictions are currently being accessed primarily by public transportation, compared to just over 5% nationwide. Nearly 78% 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-o. Poverty Level by Educational Attainment, Richmond and U.S., 2010-2014**

	City of Richmond	U.S.
Less than High School	35.1%	27.6%
High School or Equivalent	22.4%	14.2%
Some College	17.5%	10.5%
Bachelor's Degree or higher	6.8%	4.5%

Source: American Community Survey, Table S-1701.



# TARGETS AND METRICS

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

	City of Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
2014	23.7%	12.7%

Source: Smart Beginnings Greater Richmond, accessed at <http://www.virginiareportcard.com/map.php>

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 Kindergarteners 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 even though the statewide figure has fallen recently. 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*

	City of Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
2014-15	64% (17%)	75% (21%)

Source: Virginia Department of Education: Virginia School Report Card, Richmond City Public Schools, 2014-15.

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 2014-15, Richmond third graders passed the Reading Standards of Learning test at a rate eleven points below the statewide average. Importantly, there was also a gap in the pass rate of economically disadvantaged Richmond students compared to the Commonwealth, of the same magnitude (53% pass rate for economically disadvantaged students in the City, compared to 64% statewide). The 2014-15 pass rate of 64% was a substantial improvement from the two previous years, however.



**Table ED-3a. Proportion of 8th graders in Richmond Public Schools Passing Reading SOL Test (Compared to State Benchmark).**

	City of Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
2014-15	<b>46% (4%)</b>	<b>75% (11%)</b>

**Table ED-3b. Proportion of 8th graders in Richmond Public Schools Passing Math SOL tests (Compared to State Benchmark).**

	City of Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
2014-15	<b>44% (2%)</b>	<b>74% (10%)</b>

Source: Virginia Department of Education: Virginia School Report Card, Richmond City Public Schools, 2014-15.

Notes: While the academic gap between Richmond students and the Commonwealth as a whole is visible at the elementary level, with gaps of 13 and 8 points in 5th grade reading and mathematics in 2014-15 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 2014-15, fewer than half of Richmond 8th graders passed the reading and math SOLs, compared to about three-quarters of students on each test statewide, a gap of 29 points in reading and 30 points in math. This gap is partly explained by poverty: when considering only economically disadvantaged students the gap between Richmond students and all Virginia students is only 12 points in reading and 18 points in math. Also, the 8th grade performance in 2014-15 improved notably from the previous two years. Even so, the wide overall gap between readiness for high school learning among Richmond students and students statewide is a matter of serious concern and indicates the need for continued focus on school improvement as well as holistic adolescent development in Richmond.

# TARGETS AND METRICS

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

### City of Richmond

	Overall	Standard	Advanced
2015	81.4%	70.6%	27.0%

### Commonwealth of Virginia

	Overall	Standard	Advanced
2015	90.5%	86.7%	51.5%

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

*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.*

Notes: For many years the City of Richmond has ranked at or near the bottom of official graduation rates in the Commonwealth of Virginia. A hopeful trend is that the official graduation rate climbed significantly between 2011 and 2015, helping close the gap with the statewide figure to just 9.1%. (81.4% to 90.5%). However, 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—16.1%, 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 24.5% 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)**

**City of Richmond**

	Total	4-Year College Only
<b>Class of 2014</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>34%</b>

**Commonwealth of Virginia**

	Total	4-Year College Only
<b>Class of 2014</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>43%</b>

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 2013-14, only 39% 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 nearly 320 students a year who either are not graduating with a standard diploma or not continuing their education after high school. That gap can be described as creating a virtual pipeline into poverty, and helps explain the high rate of “disconnected youth” in Richmond (see Table ED-6, just below).

# TARGETS AND METRICS

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**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.**

	City of Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
<b>2010-14</b>	<b>1,501 (12.0%)</b>	<b>29,924 (6.7%)</b>
<b>2010-14 Male</b>	<b>934 (15.3%)</b>	<b>16,825 (7.4%)</b>
<b>2010-14 Female</b>	<b>567 (8.9%)</b>	<b>13,099 (6.0%)</b>

Source: American Community Survey, Table B-14005.

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 METRICS

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 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 encourage 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. Number and Proportion of Housing-Burdened Households in City, All Households and Households Earning < \$35,000**

	City of Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
2010-14 All	38,464 (45%)	33%
2010-14 Under \$35k Income	28,366 (82%)	71%

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). 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 both a major community commitment to build affordable housing to meet the needs of both current residents and newcomers, and also effective wealth building strategies to allow more Richmond residents to increase household income past the \$35,000 threshold and beyond.

# TARGETS AND METRICS

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

## 2015 Status Update

**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. Funding for remainder of development project (1200-1400 mixed income units total, including minimum of 504 public housing equivalent units) being sought through the federal Choice Neighborhoods Initiative program and from other sources. First stage of “People Plan” implementation to begin in spring 2016.**

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. Nonetheless, 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**

2015

9.5% (19,087)

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

Table H-3 is related to yet distinct from Table H-2. Nearly 38% of Richmonders below the poverty line also live in extremely high-poverty neighborhoods, exceeding 40%. In the most recent American Community Survey, 12 of 66 census tracts in the City have this level of poverty. 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, a greater overall community resource level. Public housing redevelopment that simply relocates residents to other extremely high poverty communities will not achieve this goal.

It also should be noted, that while over 19,000 low-income residents live in extremely high poverty tracts, many low-income residents (about 14,500) 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 so that the poverty rate level itself falls in these neighborhoods.



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

	City-wide	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th
<b>2000</b>	<b>73</b> <b>(5867)</b>	<b>2</b> <b>(109)</b>	<b>9</b> <b>(629)</b>	<b>7</b> <b>(540)</b>	<b>0</b> <b>(237)</b>	<b>4</b> <b>(575)</b>	<b>19</b> <b>(1343)</b>	<b>11</b> <b>(895)</b>	<b>14</b> <b>(963)</b>	<b>7</b> <b>(576)</b>
<b>2015</b>	<b>43</b> <b>(4409)</b>	<b>1</b> <b>(76)</b>	<b>1</b> <b>(305)</b>	<b>5</b> <b>(623)</b>	<b>2</b> <b>(185)</b>	<b>2</b> <b>(408)</b>	<b>13</b> <b>(938)</b>	<b>7</b> <b>(640)</b>	<b>5</b> <b>(656)</b>	<b>7</b> <b>(577)</b>

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 the redistricting plan adopted in 2012 as well as real trend changes.

Notes: The City of Richmond has witnessed a dramatic reduction in violent crime overall in the past twenty years, particularly in the homicide rate. The number of homicides in the city annually is now roughly one-half the level since in the mid-2000s, which itself represented a dramatic reduction from the carnage of the 1990s. The City’s homicide rate has remained roughly stable over the past five years, but murders in the City continue to be disproportionately located in high poverty areas. The four Council districts with the highest share of poverty (6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th) in 2015 witnessed 74% of all homicides and 64% of reported assaults. Continued community response to violence in partnership with Richmond Police Department as well as the provision of more educational and economic opportunities are critical components of achieving further improvements in violent crime in Richmond.

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

	City of Richmond	Commonwealth of Virginia
<b>2010-14</b>	<b>17.5% (36,408)</b>	<b>12.1%</b>

Source: American Community Survey, Table S-2701.

# SUMMARY OF CURRENT CHALLENGES

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## One Year and Five Year Plans of the Office of Community Wealth Building

The Office of Community Wealth Building was established as a permanent City agency in December 2015. Logistical and practical issues related to that transition are still ongoing. Fiscal 2017 will be the first year in which the Office is fully self-sufficient as a department with control over allocated program funds for the entire year.

With that backdrop, and keeping in mind the large array of activities and initiatives the Office is involved in, the primary focus of the Office over the remainder of calendar 2016 and FY 2017 is to establish a solid procedural foundation for the Office, foster ongoing staff development, and bring to fruition current initiatives in different stages of development. Table 4 shows the current budget associated with the Office and overall program. Currently the Office has ten full-time permanent positions, one permanent part-time position, and two grant-funded full-time positions. Six of the ten permanent positions are based in the Center for Workforce Innovation or BLISS programs, and the two grant-funded positions focus on early childhood issues with the support of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

Table 4. FY 2016 Community Wealth Building Budget by Agency and Policy Area

### Agency

**Office of Community Wealth Building, General Fund: \$1,317,436**

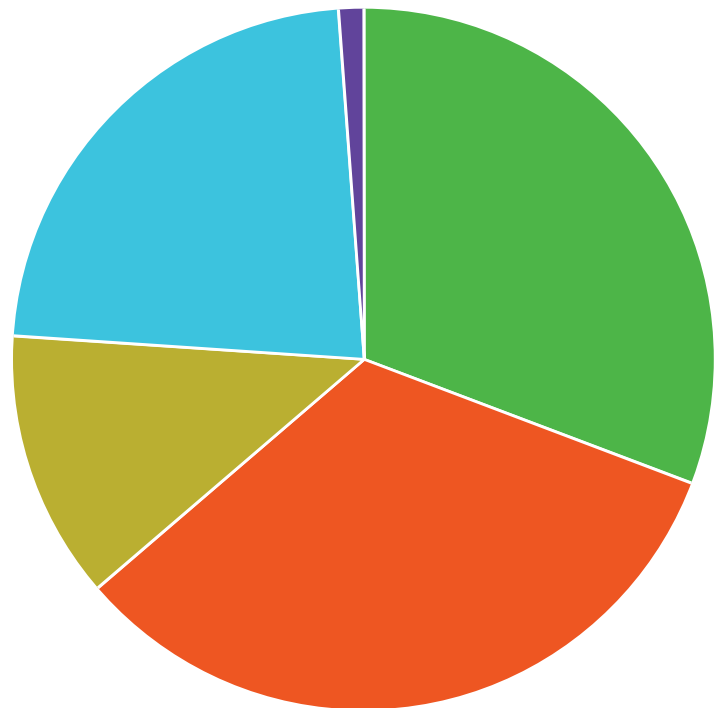
**Affiliated Nondepartmental Grants: \$1,411,849**

**Special Funds—Community Wealth Building: \$529,000**

**Special Funds—Affordable Housing Trust Fund (Administered by ECD): \$975,000**

**Support for Maggie L. Walker Initiative and AHTF Citizens Boards (City Council): \$50,000**

**Grand Total: \$4,283,285**



Totals reflect budget transfer ordinances passed by City Council as part of package establishing the Office of Community Wealth Building as a permanent agency, December 14, 2015.



Preliminary plans for FY 2017, contingent on provision of funding, include:

### **Employment**

- Continuing to expand the service levels provided by the Center for Workforce Innovation, strengthening long-term tracking of participants, and building strong collaborations with other workforce providers
- Expanding the BLISS program from current enrollment of 18 families to at least 35 families by end of December 2016; possible further expansion into Creighton Court
- Completion of the Social Enterprise planning process; implementing programming at Conrad Center; beginning implementation of Richmond Social enterprise plan
- Collaborating 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
- Assisting as assigned in the successful implementation of the GRTC Pulse project and in continued advocacy for a regional transit system

### **Education**

- Completion of the Richmond Early Childhood Strategic Plan in 2016
- Launch of the Gilpin Court Hub Early Childhood Initiative in 2016; possible replication in Creighton Court in 2017
- Continued development of the RVA Reads Initiative
- Continued support and development of NextUp RVA
- Continued support and development of RVA Future, including identifying strategies for developing a scholarship program
- Continued support of Communities in Schools of Richmond
- Continue to work to build linkages and relationships among educational providers and to link educational providers with other resources that can help families, particularly in the educational arena



# SUMMARY OF CURRENT CHALLENGES

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## Housing

- Continued operation of Affordable Housing Trust Fund
- Continued development and possible expansion of Good Neighborhood Initiative
- Completion of People Planning process and submission of Choice Neighborhood Initiative application for redevelopment of Creighton Court
- Begin implementation of the People Plan for Creighton Court

## Administrative/General

- Continued community outreach
- Continued development of the Maggie L. Walker Citizens Advisory Board
- Continued 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
- Strategic pursuit of grant opportunities with potential to substantially advance aims of the community wealth building initiative

## Elements of a Five Year Plan

Over the course of 2016 the Office of Community Wealth Building will be developing its first detailed five year plan, with input from the Maggie L. Walker Citizens Advisory Board and other stakeholders. The key goal of this plan is to chart a path by which the actions and programming conducted or supported by the Office of Community Wealth Building can, in concert with other key actors, help generate meaningful, measurable change in the community. This means improvements in most or all of the eighteen intermediate metrics, and ultimately measurable reduction in the overall poverty and child poverty rates. To achieve this goal, the resources (public and private, local, state, and national) devoted to this effort must grow over time, but there also must be a parallel development of capacity to perform and sustain this work in an effective way. The chart below illustrates key elements of the five year plan already committed to; other elements or initiatives may be added over time as well. Successful execution and support of the programs and initiatives already under way represents an ambitious agenda. Given the magnitude of the need in Richmond, the Office of Community Wealth Building, the City as a whole, and key community partners will need to be strategic and realistic concerning the pace at which initiatives can sustainably be supported as the effort grows in scale and impact.



That said, a key component of this five year plan must involve attention to resource development and the ongoing leveraging of both public and private sector resources in support of this effort. That is one reason why collaboration with other major institutions in the City of Richmond must be an ongoing priority of the Office of Community Wealth Building. To move from year-by-year programmatic achievements to real movement in the intermediate metrics presented in the Targets and Metrics section, and ultimately to long-term poverty reduction—will require tangible buy-in and ongoing commitment from institutional partners, including the business, university, nonprofit, and philanthropic communities. Ongoing, strong collaboration within the public sector and between the public and private sector in turn will also better position Richmond to receive support from external sources such as national foundations as well as state and federal government.

### Provisional Five Year Plan of Office of Community Wealth Building

Administration		Year 1 16-17	Year 2 17-18	Year 3 18-19	Year 4 19-20	Year 5 20-21
Policies and Procedures	Establish policies and procedures for work flow and accountability as a new agency	Targeted Completion	Pending Completion	Pending Completion	Pending Completion	Pending Completion
Human Resources	Adequately meet staffing needs as new department	Targeted Completion	Pending Completion	Pending Completion	Pending Completion	Pending Completion
Community Outreach	Continued community outreach, including at least one major public event similar or greater in scale to the June 2015 Community Wealth Building Summit	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Maggie L. Walker Citizens Advisory Board	Continued development of the Maggie L. Walker Citizens Advisory Board	Targeted Completion	Pending Completion	Pending Completion	Pending Completion	Pending Completion
Partnership Development	Continued development of relationships and partnerships with local philanthropic institutions, universities, health systems, business organizations, and other stakeholders supportive of community wealth building goals	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Data Tracking and Reporting	Develop and maintain system for tracking data and regular reporting across all program areas	Targeted Completion	Pending Completion	Pending Completion	Pending Completion	Pending Completion
Resource Development	Strategic pursuit of grant opportunities with potential to substantially advance aims of the community wealth building initiative	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing

Targeted Completion

Pending Completion

Ongoing

# SUMMARY OF CURRENT CHALLENGES

## Provisional Five Year Plan of Office of Community Wealth Building (cont)

Employment and Earnings		Year 1 16-17	Year 2 17-18	Year 3 18-19	Year 4 19-20	Year 5 20-21
Center for Workforce Innovation	Expand the service levels provided by the Center for Workforce Innovation					
	Strengthen long-term tracking of participants					
	Build strong collaborations with other workforce providers					
BLISS: Building Lives to Independence and Self-Sufficiency	Expand the BLISS program from current enrollment; 18 families to at least 35 families by end of December 2017					
	Expand the BLISS program into Creighton Court					
Social Enterprise	Completion of the Social Enterprise planning process					
	Implement programming at Conrad Center					
	Begin implementation of Richmond Social Enterprise Plan					
Business Recruitment Activities	Continued collaboration with the Department of Economic and Community Development on business recruitment activities with the aim of strengthening connections with employers					

 Targeted Completion

 Pending Completion

 Ongoing



Provisional Five Year Plan of Office of Community Wealth Building (cont)

Educational Attainment		Year 1 16-17	Year 2 17-18	Year 3 18-19	Year 4 19-20	Year 5 20-21
Early Childhood Initiatives	Completion of the Richmond Early Childhood Strategic Plan in 2016	Targeted Completion	Pending Completion	Pending Completion	Pending Completion	Pending Completion
	Launch of the Gilpin Court Hub Early Childhood Initiative in 2016; possible replication in Creighton Court in 2017	Pending Completion	Targeted Completion	Pending Completion	Pending Completion	Pending Completion
	Continued development of the RVA Reads Initiative	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Adolescent Transition	Continued support and development of NextUp RVA	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Promise Scholarship (RVA Future) Initiative	Continued support and development of RVA Future, including identifying strategies for developing a scholarship program	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Supportive Services	Continued support of Communities in Schools of Richmond	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Partnership Development	Continue to work to build linkages and relationships among educational providers and to link educational providers with other resources that can help families, particularly in the educational arena	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing

Targeted Completion

Pending Completion

Ongoing

# SUMMARY OF CURRENT CHALLENGES

Provisional Five Year Plan of Office of Community Wealth Building (cont)

Housing and Quality of Life	Year 1 16-17	Year 2 17-18	Year 3 18-19	Year 4 19-20	Year 5 20-21
Continued operation of Affordable Housing Trust Fund					
Continued development and possible expansion of Good Neighbor Initiative					
Completion of People Planning process and submission of Choice Neighborhood Initiative application for redevelopment of Creighton Court					
Begin implementation of the People Plan for Creighton Court					

 Targeted Completion

 Pending Completion

 Ongoing



# CONCLUSION

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Community wealth building is inherently a process. To move this work forward to make the intended impact in the years to come, the entire community, including both the public and private sector, must support and embrace the effort. The Office of Community Wealth Building aims to be a hub and a catalyst for productive change in the core areas of employment, education and housing. This means working diligently to build pathways out of poverty for families, and it means working towards systemic policy and institutional change. It also means encouraging other agencies and institutional partners internal and external to city government to join in and become part of the solution.

This report has articulated Richmond's community wealth building strategy, laid out targets and metrics for change, and documented progress to date. It is our hope that these goals and metrics will be widely shared among public agencies as well as by the wider Richmond community, including universities, nonprofits, the philanthropic community, and engaged citizens. Just as the Office of Community Wealth Building is now a permanent agency of the City of Richmond, the goals and targets laid out by this effort should become part of the common currency of Richmond's civic and political discourse.

A Richmond that successfully reduced overall poverty by 40% and child poverty by 50% by 2030 would be a markedly more just community and a markedly better place to live. It would be a community in which public education would have a better chance of being successful, as children benefit from greater stability in their parents' lives. It would be a community with more resources and a greater capacity to meet its ongoing needs in education and infrastructure. It would be a community that has taken meaningful strides beyond the deep legacies of housing segregation and isolation of low-income communities.

That is a Richmond worth working for. The role of this annual report in the years to come should be to provide an honest and informative assessment of the City's progress, and how far we still have to go, in realizing this vision of a more equitable and inclusive City.

