

City of Portsmouth, VA

POVERTY STUDY



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ABOUT THE PORTSMOUTH POVERTY STUDY

In February 2017, the Portsmouth City Council held its annual retreat to identify several high-profile, high-impact issues that will require involvement from a variety of Portsmouth stakeholders, such as the public, the government, businesses, educational institutions, and community organizations. A top priority identified during the retreat was to create a City Council Taskforce on Poverty.

In February 2018, the City of Portsmouth finalized a contract with consulting firm Thomas P. Miller and Associates (TPMA) to conduct a study on poverty in Portsmouth and to put forth implementable recommendations for the City Council to consider. Between February 2018 and June 2019, TPMA worked with Portsmouth's Planning Department, City Manager's Office, and a variety of community stakeholders to collect data and develop this report. It includes information about poverty and its effects in Portsmouth; contains an overview of Portsmouth's current poverty prevention, alleviation, and research efforts; reviews of other city's efforts to address poverty; provides findings from public input regarding the causes and correlations of poverty; offers recommendations for the Portsmouth City Council; and highlights priority census tracts within Portsmouth experiencing high rates of poverty.

ABOUT POVERTY IN PORTSMOUTH

Poverty impacts more than sixteen thousand adults and children in the City of Portsmouth. The financial hardships faced by those living in poverty have significant ramifications on an individual's health and well-being, as well as their academic and professional success. Portsmouth has a higher rate of poverty (18.0%) than both the Commonwealth of Virginia (10.6%) and the United States (13.4%). This high poverty rate indicates that Portsmouth may benefit from focusing on efforts to mitigating the effects of poverty and reversing its root causes; however, the effects and root causes of poverty are often challenging to identify, measure, and address.

There are individuals living in poverty who may be able to secure employment given appropriate support and training. However, they may find that their wages, while surpassing poverty levels or the state minimum wage, fail to cover their essential expenses based on the typical cost of living in Portsmouth. Additionally, some individuals are unable to work due to age, health, significant disability, or a lack of transportation options. For these individuals, overcoming poverty through employment may not be a reasonable expectation.

Programs and services intended to assist those individuals living in poverty or struggling to make ends meet need to be as diverse as the individuals they intend to serve. These programs can be costly, time consuming, and need to factor in a variety of needs beyond training and education – such as childcare and transportation costs. This analysis provides additional information about the magnitude and effects of poverty in the United States, with additional context around how this relates to Portsmouth.

The Effects of Poverty

While poverty does not affect every community equally, it negatively impacts a broad range of individual and family outcomes for an extended period for those who have experienced it. Both

children and adults living in poverty face significant barriers to achieving the same quality of life and success as their more affluent peers, including an increased risk of negative health outcomes, high levels of stress, and poor academic and job performance.

The federal poverty level (FPL) provides a baseline for determining a community's economic health, but the full extent to which poverty's effects negatively impact communities and individuals requires a thorough understanding of local context. FPL is a measure of income issued by the Department of Health and Human Services on an annual basis. For individuals, the 2018 federal poverty level is \$12,140. For families of two or more, the FPL increases slightly based on family size.¹ Specifically, a family of two meets the federal poverty level with \$16,460, and a family of four with \$25,100. These levels are used to determine eligibility for certain federal programs.

Those who manage to overcome poverty may carry lasting health and emotional impacts in the long run. Also, once above the poverty level, individuals may still struggle to make ends meet depending on the local cost of housing, food, transportation, and medical care. For example, poverty is a risk factor for lead exposure in the home, and poor black children are twice as likely as poor Hispanic and white children to have concentrations of lead in their blood.² Households with children bear the additional cost of childcare and a larger family without necessarily earning more. Because of this, the rate of food insecurity for children living in poverty is nearly 40%.² Without basic needs being met, children in poverty are also four and one-half times more likely to drop out of school than children from higher-income families (8.7 percent versus 2.0 percent).³

While some communities and demographic groups suffer from disproportionately high poverty levels, poverty can impact nearly any individual, regardless of their age, socio-economic background, or education. Additionally, poverty can occur periodically at any point throughout an individual's life, and those who manage to escape poverty are likely to experience it again.⁴ Poverty rates fail to illustrate the full extent of individuals that enter and exit poverty

In both adults and children, poverty can:

- Negatively impact academic performance.^a
- Increase stress and anxiety levels, which in turn negatively affect health.^b
- Lead to poor nutrition and obesity as a result of a poor diet.
- Make living with a chronic or severe health condition difficult if the cost of medicines is prohibitively expensive.

a. Impact of Poverty on Student Outcomes. (2015). *Hanover Research*.

b. Why Poverty is Bad for All of Us. (2014). *Johns Hopkins Health Review*.

¹ Federal Poverty Level definition. (n.d.). Accessed at: <https://www.healthcare.gov/glossary/federal-poverty-level-fpl/>.

² American Academy of Pediatrics. (April 2016). Accessed at: <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/137/4/e20160340>.

³ Effects of Poverty, Hunger, and Homelessness on Children and Youth (n.d.). *American Psychological Association*. Accessed at: <https://www.apa.org/pi/families/poverty>.

⁴ Understanding Poverty. (2009). *The Urban Institute*. Accessed at: <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/30636/411956-Transitioning-In-and-Out-of-Poverty.PDF>.

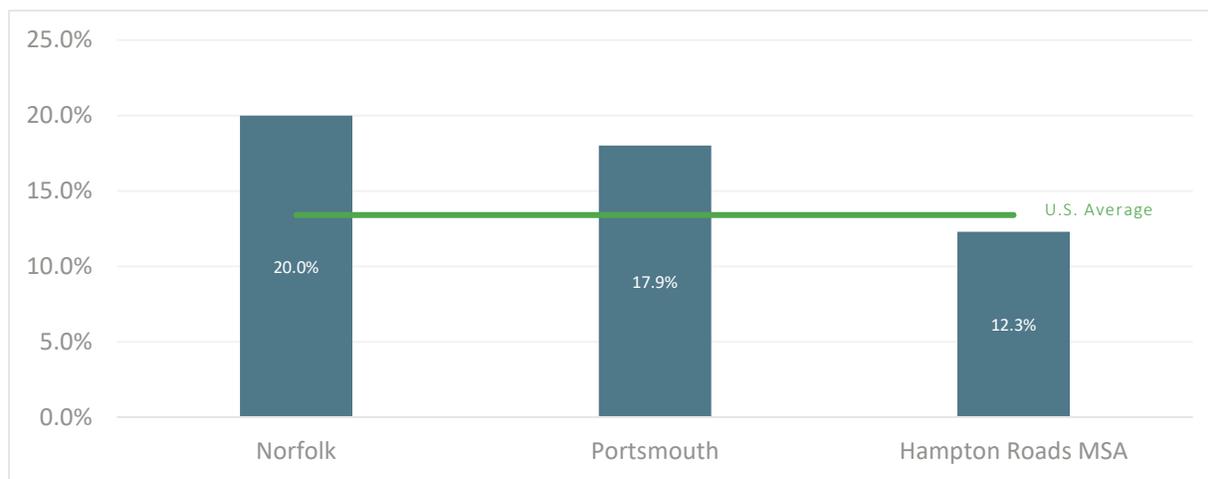
daily. In other words, the poverty rate may underestimate the total number of individuals impacted by poverty in a community. Poverty's effects are pervasive and the full impact, root causes, and appropriate solutions are complicated and potentially difficult to identify.

Poverty in Portsmouth

As of 2017, slightly more than 1 in 10 Virginians were estimated to be living beneath the federal poverty line (10.6%). While this is fewer than the national average of 13.4%, these individuals still represent an important portion of Virginia's population that face significant barriers and the associated detrimental effects of poverty. Examining poverty at the community level demonstrates that poverty is not evenly distributed across the State; some communities have poverty rates that far exceed the rest of the State and the United States as a whole. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that 16,228 Portsmouth residents live in poverty. This equates to an estimated 18.0% of Portsmouth's population, which exceeds the national poverty level by 4.5 percentage points, and the state rate by 7.3 percentage points.

In comparison to nearby communities, Portsmouth has a slightly lower poverty rate than Norfolk, but a much higher rate than the Hampton Roads metropolitan statistical area (MSA), with nearly 5.6% more of Portsmouth's population living in poverty by comparison. As all three places have higher poverty rates than the Commonwealth, this points to potential regional disparities in Virginia. Portsmouth and Norfolk especially have populations in which significant proportions of the residents (nearly 1 in 5) are experiencing the negative impacts of poverty. This can exacerbate local workforce issues and public health outcomes, and overall can threaten the community's well-being.⁵

Poverty Rates of Portsmouth and Nearby Communities



Who Does Poverty Impact in Portsmouth?

Of the 16,228 citizens of Portsmouth who live in poverty, children are the most likely to be impacted. Nearly 1 in 3 children under the age of 18 live in families below the poverty level.

⁵ Percentages are based on estimates found in the American Community Survey (ACS) 2017 1-year estimates tables S1701, S1703 for their respective geographies.

This may be due in part to the fact that poverty rates depend on the number of individuals in a household; many impoverished families have just one or two adults, but may have a number of children living with them. Additionally, poverty not only affects a greater proportion of children, but also affects children more harshly than adults because some conditions of poverty such as lack of nutrition, frequent relocation, or unsafe physical environments (i.e. lead poisoning, unsafe air quality, higher crime) have a greater effect on the developing brain.

Other groups with higher rates of poverty include females and individuals with a disability; in both groups, approximately 1 in 5 individuals live in poverty. These categories are not mutually exclusive, but the high rates point the disproportionate burden of poverty on specific population groups. Given the diverse and specific needs of each group, the most likely factors contributing to their elevated poverty level should be considered separately. The degree of support and most effective methods to providing assistance for individuals living in poverty will depend largely on the individual's needs and specific circumstances; single mothers will face different challenges from individuals living with a disability or those who are 65 and over. For example, single mothers may need assistance with childcare costs, while individuals with a disability may require accessible workspaces or reliable transportation to and from work. Accordingly, the assistance required to get out of poverty will differ greatly within a single neighborhood or community.

Why are Some Individuals Impacted More than Others?

The section above examines who is disproportionately affected by poverty (i.e., what percentage of each group is affected by poverty). This section, however, examines what poverty looks like in Portsmouth, and what percentage of the poverty population might be able to be served through workforce solutions versus other social benefit supports.

Of Portsmouth's population below the poverty level, only about 1 in 3 is of working age and does not have a diagnosed disability that significantly impacts their ability to work (35.2%). The remaining individuals (children, the elderly, those who are unable to work) still require basic amenities such as housing, food, and medical care.

- Nearly half of those impacted by poverty in Portsmouth are under the age of 18 (45.1%)
- Approximately 20% of Portsmouth residents in poverty live with a significant disability
- Approximately 20% are over the age of 65
- Only 33% of Portsmouth residents in poverty are of working age and do not have a significant disability that may prevent their participation in the labor force

When unable to work full-time to support oneself due to age, health, or disability, the availability of alternative support systems can provide individuals with access to healthy foods, necessary healthcare and medication, and basic housing. Alternative support may include public services, social networks, and philanthropic or non-profit organizations. Even when these systems are able to meet immediate needs, they expose these individuals to additional uncertainty and instability and may not provide the needed support to fully overcome poverty.



Other factors that may make it difficult for some primary earners to obtain stable and reliable employment to support their families may include a temporary disability, a lack of specific skills or knowledge, or a lack of full-time employment available in the market. When unable to obtain or sustain full-time employment, the ability to provide support for oneself and family becomes increasingly difficult. Childcare, education, and related expenses put additional burden on the primary caretakers of minors. Single-headed households face additional challenges in balancing working with childcare if they are unable to afford the costs. As household expenses rise, the burden of staying above the poverty level increases.

The Difference Between Poverty and Living Wage

Over 3,000 Portsmouth residents, or 8.4% of the civilian labor force 16 years and over, worked either full-time or part-time in 2017 and still fell below the poverty level.⁷ This is higher than the national level of 6.9% that was employed in 2017 and still fell below the poverty level. Whether working full- or part-time, employed individuals that still experience poverty provide evidence that sometimes having a job is not enough to make ends meet. The inability to maintain a standard of living above the poverty line, despite being employed, indicates a disparity between wages and the cost of living in Portsmouth for some residents.

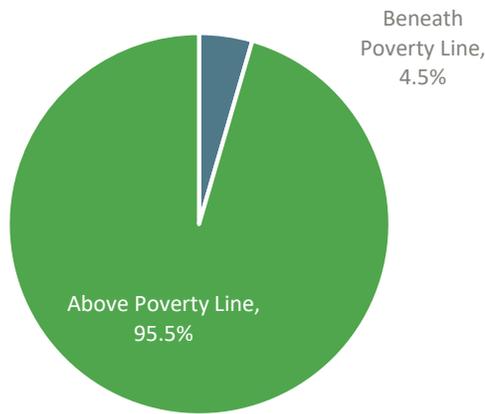
Working full-time at minimum wage, two adults are unable to meet the basic spending needs of a typical household in Portsmouth. The MIT Living Wage Calculator 2018 estimates that a typical Portsmouth family of two adults and one child spends \$60,593 on an annual basis. This spending includes food, childcare, medical expenses, housing, transportation, taxes, and a general other category.

⁶ American Community Survey (ACS) 2017 1-year estimates table B18130

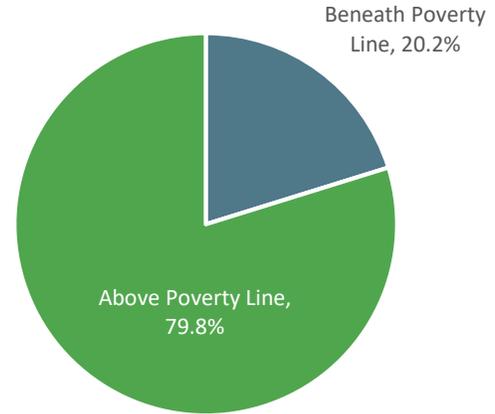
⁷ American Community Survey (ACS) 2017 1-year estimates table B1701

The MIT Living Wage Calculator estimates that each adult in such a household requires \$14.57 per hour to cover typical household expenses (living wage). However, the state minimum wage falls nearly 50% short of a typical household's spending needs:⁸ both adults earning the statewide minimum wage of \$7.25 will leave the family \$30,433 short of the living wage for an average family of that size. Average spending may vary between households, but the cost of key necessities does not.

Adults Working Full-Time



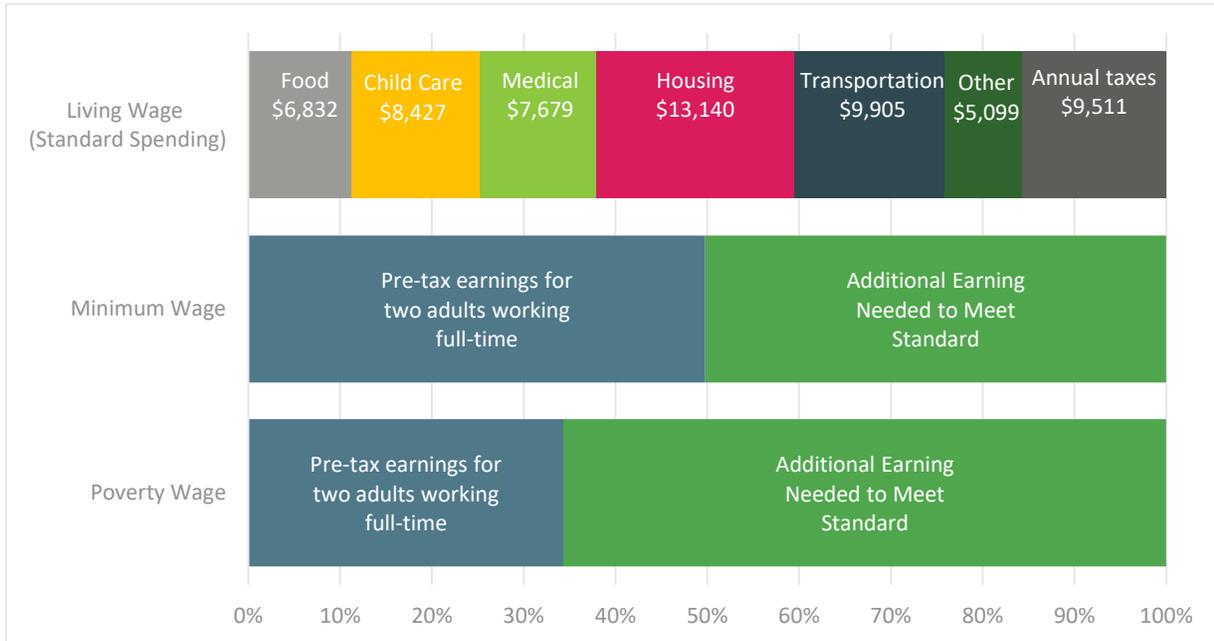
Adults Working Part-Time



A single adult with no children in Portsmouth will still fall short of the living wage by \$13,028 if they work full-time at minimum wage. If that individual is responsible for the care of a child, the gap between the minimum wage and living wage grows to \$40,803. While above the poverty wage, the minimum wage fails to meet the needs of a typical Portsmouth resident or family.

⁷ Average Household Spending for Family of Two Adults and One Child in Portsmouth, VA. Source: MIT Living Wage Calculator based on The MIT Living Wage Calculator can be found at <http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/51740>. The data reflected in this report was pulled on March 19, 2019.

*How Earnings Compare to Average Spending
 (Two Adults Working Full-Time with One Child in Portsmouth)*



Not All Employment is Equal

Many of Portsmouth’s common occupations will leave a single adult working full-time below the living wage. For example, of twenty-two common occupations in the city, four do not provide a living wage for a single adult. And if that adult is responsible for caring for a child, then the salary of fifteen of the twenty-two most common occupations will leave the adult unable to afford typical household expenses. While many common occupations in Portsmouth provided wages that are greater than both poverty and minimum wage, they still may not meet the needs of a typical household or adult in the city. The inability to forego essential costs such as food, transportation, and housing can exacerbate the challenges faced by individuals working in a number of common occupations that, while technically earning more than minimum wage, leave them struggling.

Typical Annual Salary for Selected Occupations in Portsmouth

Occupational Area	Typical Annual Salary
Management	\$126,758.00
Computer & Mathematical	\$100,187.00
Legal	\$93,798.00
Architecture & Engineering	\$84,159.00
Business & Financial Operations	\$79,016.00
Life, Physical, & Social Science	\$78,923.00
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	\$64,675.00
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, & Media	\$53,534.00
Education, Training, & Library	\$51,683.00
Installation, Maintenance, & Repair	\$48,123.00
Community & Social Service	\$47,084.00
Protective Service	\$43,021.00
Construction & Extraction	\$42,064.00
Office & Administrative Support	\$35,984.00
Production	\$34,832.00
Transportation & Material Moving	\$33,114.00
Farming, Fishing, & Forestry	\$31,849.00
Healthcare Support	\$29,401.00
Sales & Related	\$26,366.00
Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	\$25,224.00
Personal Care & Service	\$22,848.00
Food Preparation & Serving Related	\$21,017.00

Living Wage for 1
 Adult supporting 1
 Child:
 \$55,889

Living Wage for 1
 Adult:
 \$28,108

Source: MIT Living Wage Calculator & ACS 2017 factfinder.census.gov

The financial needs of a household largely depend on their unique circumstances. The bottom line, however, is that there are a number of occupations that earn salaries above both poverty and minimum wages that cannot provide for a typical household’s expenses in Portsmouth. There are a multitude of reasons individuals may be unable to secure full-time employment in high-wage positions capable of providing their family a living wage, among them physical restrictions due to severe disability or old age, a lack of sufficient training or education for a particular occupation, and even a lack of availability for competitive jobs in high-demand.

In addition to being unable to gain and maintain high-earning occupations due to physical and age restrictions, individuals also may lack the educational and skill requirements to facilitate professional mobility to avoid and overcome poverty. Multiple professions typically earning the highest wages in Portsmouth require advanced education or specialized training.

What Does it Take to Get Out of Poverty?

Whether individuals or social services and local agencies cover costs, overcoming barriers associated with poverty requires investment. Workforce training, youth programs, and other forms of social service programs differ largely in cost and structure. The level of support and

costs largely depend on the needs of the individuals that they serve, the number of hours, and the additional resources required to get adults into meaningful jobs that pay wages that meet their needs. For adults, the cost of effective employment and training programs can range from \$1,142 to \$5,000 per participant.⁹ Programs targeted toward academic support and life skills for youth can range from \$1,000 to over \$7,000 per year per child per year.¹⁰ The total number of hours ranges greatly as well, depending on the age group, services provided, and overall design of the program.

While programs may provide the support and training to prepare adults and children for meaningful and quality employment, the program costs stated above typically do not factor in a variety of additional placement support that may be necessary for an individual's long-term success. For example, many training programs do not address an individual's need to earn while they learn so that day-to-day expenses can be covered. Additionally, many individuals need assistance with child or elder care, transportation, and in some cases self-advocacy around healthcare needs and accommodations.

⁸ Measuring a State's Return on Investment: An Executive Summary, College Counts.; Investing in the Early Years: The Costs and Benefits of Investing in Early Childhood in New Hampshire, Rand Corporation, 2017.

⁹ Current-Generation Youth Programs What Works, What Doesn't, and at What Cost? Rand Corporation, 2008.

CURRENT PORTSMOUTH POVERTY ALLEVIATION EFFORTS

Multiple organizations and entities in and around the City of Portsmouth address poverty—either directly or indirectly—through programs providing resources such as housing, food, shelter, training, or education. The Current Efforts section of this report does not contain information about every single effort to address poverty in Portsmouth, but rather provides an overview of the major Portsmouth-based systems that assist individuals living in poverty.

Interviews with individuals from organizations working to address poverty in Portsmouth highlighted that organizations often are not able to keep up with the community's needs. Even when working at full capacity with all of the tools they currently have access to, organizations would need additional funding, space, and programs to address the complex needs of the community. Moving forward in addressing poverty in Portsmouth will require these agencies and others to pool resources, communicate, bring in new funding, and work together towards shared goals.

City Manager's Office and Planning Department

The City Manager's Office and the Planning Department have participated in various efforts with community organizations or other departments to address poverty, either directly or indirectly. These initiatives span from efforts to revitalize Portsmouth's Olde Towne, working with the Portsmouth Redevelopment and Housing Authority (PRHA) to demolish and rebuild low income housing, and working with the Portsmouth Police Department to engage communities and businesses in conversations around crime, panhandling, and homelessness in the city.

Other City-based Efforts

Other City efforts also are underway to provide new/additional supports to individuals with low incomes. For example, the Portsmouth Connectivity Study seeks to provide high-quality internet access throughout the city. Additionally, the city is beginning a new housing study to assess the supply of and demand for housing in Portsmouth.

Homeless-Serving Institutions

The Continuum of Care for Portsmouth is the Portsmouth Homeless Action Consortium (PHAC) run through the Portsmouth Area Resources Coalition (PARC), which also provides direct services to homeless individuals. PHAC is a group of organizations working together to provide comprehensive services for individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Some of the members of PHAC include service providers such as:

- Portsmouth Area Resources Coalition (PARC), an agency that provides a central intake service for persons who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness, and that directs and refers them to available services in the city and region. PARC also has programs that provide shelter, transitional housing, tenant based rental assistance, and homelessness prevention and diversion.
- Portsmouth Volunteers for the Homeless, a winter shelter created through a partnership of twenty-four local churches that open their doors to single adults needing cold-weather shelter.

- Portsmouth Redevelopment and Housing Authority (PRHA), an agency that runs the City's Section 8, public housing, tax credit properties, and housing voucher programs.
- Oasis, a feeding ministry and soup kitchen that is part of the Feeding America network, serves two free meals a day every day as well as operating a food pantry and thrift store.
- The Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore works with local Portsmouth organizations (including Oasis) to serve 15 million meals to Portsmouth's food-insecure population each year. The organization also has a mobile pantry, a backpack food program, and a summer lunch program.

While these organizations provide services for many Portsmouth residents, some still have long waitlists of individuals who cannot be served given their current capacity. PRHA has about 7,000 people on a waitlist for housing vouchers, and the average person is on a waitlist for 8-10 years before receiving services. Oasis reports a waitlist of more than 100 individuals for their senior citizens meal delivery service. Additionally, leadership from multiple homeless serving institutions noted the difficulty that their clients face having to wait in multiple lines or on multiple waitlists for each individual service they need to access.

Tidewater Community College

Tidewater Community College (TCC) opened a campus in Portsmouth in 2010. This campus runs a variety of programs that were created in collaboration with Portsmouth's K-12 schools (such as dual enrollment programs), as well as with local industry partners (such as certificate programs). One new program at TCC, the Bridge Plus program, is showing early success: of nineteen students who entered the program, nine received a GED, twelve completed the program, and six were able to retain full-time jobs after the program ended. Some examples of industry aligned credential opportunities at TCC include programs in welding, medical records, nurse aids, and computer technology.

Despite high quality and industry aligned programs being offered at TCC, many first time college students do not thrive at the community college. Many Portsmouth-area students begin college underprepared and must take remedial courses before beginning college-level courses. Additionally, many students continue to struggle with issues such as housing, transportation, and hunger, despite being enrolled in school.

Department of Social Services Programs

The Department of Social Services runs a variety of programs to address the health and welfare needs of the community by promoting self-sufficiency. Many of the initiatives focus specifically on issues surrounding poverty. DSS administers federal entitlement programs that have been proven to alleviate poverty,¹¹ such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). In addition, DSS provides employment services, tax relief for the elderly, energy assistance, and medical assistance

¹¹ Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. (2013). Various Supports for Low-Income Families Reduce Poverty and have Long-Term Positive Effects on Families and Children. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbpp.org/research/various-supports-for-low-income-families-reduce-poverty-and-have-long-term-positive-effects>

programs. Though DSS provides a variety of very important programs, sometimes those programs alone cannot sustain a person living in poverty. For example, SNAP benefits for the elderly who cannot work are often too small, and there is a gap in Medicaid coverage for adults who do not have children. A Medicaid expansion became effective on January 1, 2019, but the effects of that change have yet to be seen.

Health and Well-being

Portsmouth is home to one federally qualified community health center. This center serves both insured and uninsured individuals using sliding-scale fees and provides medical, dental, pediatric, and basic behavioral health services. The health center does serve Portsmouth's homeless population for free, but their financial model is a mixed-pay system. While the Health Center does provide valuable services for the community, they see gaps in services around substance abuse and severe mental health services that they must refer out to other agencies. Additionally, the center's leaders mentioned that their hours of operation could be a barrier to some individuals, but they added open hours on at least one Saturday a month to increase accessibility. The center also runs programs such as a dental van and back to school nights to increase access for Portsmouth residents as funding and opportunities are available.

Police

To address increasing reports of crime, homelessness, and panhandling in Portsmouth, the Police Department formed the Homeless Outreach Team (HOT). This group meets with government officials, business owners, pastors, and other community leaders to develop solutions for these problems. They also patrol areas with a high prevalence of these issues to get to know the individuals living or staying there. While the police take a positive community-based approach to addressing homelessness and panhandling, they admit that consequences such as paying a fine are not effective deterrents for people who do not have money to pay.

STUDIES COMPLETED IN OR ABOUT PORTSMOUTH

This section contains brief overviews of seven different studies completed about Portsmouth or the Hampton Roads region over the past five years. Each study is related to the issues that are correlated with poverty, such as educational achievement, housing and homelessness, employment, policing, and the demographics of individuals living in Portsmouth.

Creating a Legacy: Exploring and Understanding Education Challenges in Portsmouth, 2017

In January 2016, the City Manager reached out to Old Dominion University to discuss initiatives to aid the city in reducing crime and violence. The project resulted in two reports. The first report, “Creating a Legacy: Exploring and Understanding Education Challenges in Portsmouth, VA,” was completed in August 2017. The report examined national trends in poverty, analyzed local trends in education and poverty risk factors, and included a survey of literature about school climate and school violence.

One section of the report focused on the region’s and Portsmouth’s “concentrated disadvantage,” a phrase meaning there is a high concentration of residents of low socioeconomic status in particular communities. The analysis found that for all identifiable risk factors of concentrated disadvantage (e.g., poverty rate, unemployment rate, and public assistance) Portsmouth had higher percentages than national and state levels. Based on a review of literature, the report warned this concentrated disadvantage within the city has the potential for producing an endless cycle of poverty, which threatens the overall quality of life and image of the city.

Through a climate assessment of high schools in Portsmouth, researchers found that in spite of high levels of poverty, high levels of disadvantaged risk factors, and student discipline challenges, Portsmouth had a positive high school climate, dropout rates had declined over time, and nearly two-thirds of graduating seniors pursued post-secondary education.

Poverty Reduction: Education and Youth Development in Portsmouth, 2018

The second report completed by Old Dominion University research was entitled, “Poverty Reduction: Education and Youth Development in Portsmouth, VA.” This report was broken into five sections: Public Safety Needs Assessment, Concentrated Disadvantage amongst Hampton Roads Cities, Poverty Reduction Strategies, Youth Workforce Development, and Trauma Informed Schools.

The needs assessment found Portsmouth had a higher percentage of families and children living in poverty and faced significant economic disadvantages when compared to the Greater Hampton Roads area and the Commonwealth. For crime data, overall results showed that major crimes were seeing reductions between 2010 and 2015. However, an examination of arrest rates from FBI statistics revealed that Portsmouth appeared to have higher arrest rates, in general, than other nearby cities. Surveyed police department personnel identified parental drug use, the availability of alcohol and drugs, and unemployment as the top risk factors for crime facing the city. Less than half of police personnel surveyed said that services for

combating crime and violence in Portsmouth were adequate. Health and human services personnel were also surveyed and identified similar risk factors as the most in need of being addressed. The survey found that less than half of the responding agency representatives provided family counseling, drug or alcohol abuse counseling, employment services, or employment opportunities or training.

City Council Poverty Taskforce Presentation, 2017

In an August 2017 City Council briefing, researchers from Old Dominion University and Norfolk State University outlined their methodologies for studying poverty across three focus areas—education, workforce development, and healthy thriving communities. They described their work to conduct surveys, study school data, and complete a school climate assessment, which led to the two reports described above. The stated goal of the taskforce was “To build transformative and collaborative strategies for reducing poverty in the City of Portsmouth and empowering all City residents with the opportunity to be successful.”

Virginia Beach Comprehensive Housing Market Analysis, 2016

This U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development report from January 2016 included analysis of the economic conditions and housing markets for the Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News Housing Market Area (Virginia Beach HMA). As a part of the region, Portsmouth is affected by changes in the regional economic and housing landscape. The report found that the economy in the Virginia Beach HMA had expanded between 2011 and 2015. Most of the growth in 2015 was in the education and health services and the leisure and hospitality sectors. The housing market conditions in the HMA were slightly soft, with an estimated sales vacancy rate of 2.0% as of January 1, 2016, down from 2.5% in April 2010. The rental housing market in the HMA was considered balanced, with an estimated overall rental vacancy rate of 6.5%, down from 7.6 percent in April 2010.

Portsmouth Demographic Study, 2015

This report by the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at the University of Virginia described demographic changes in the City of Portsmouth. The study was commissioned by the Planning Department in order to help city leaders in their revision of the comprehensive plan. The report’s findings about family arrangements, housing preferences, and income levels provided TPMA context about Portsmouth’s demographic trends. Key findings include that the number of married couples with children at home had fallen by more than 50% since 1990, and the number of single parents with children had fallen as well. Meanwhile, the number of residents living alone or in other non-nuclear family arrangements had increased. Households in Portsmouth and across Virginia were much more varied than they have been in the past, which may mean demand for a more varied housing stock. The areas of Portsmouth where median income and home values had increased were urban neighborhoods near the water and the historic downtown.

Portsmouth Police Department 2019-2024 Strategic Plan, 2019

The Police Department created a strategic plan for the years 2019-2024. The five strategies identified and incorporated into the strategic plan were Community Policing and Crime Reduction, Officer Wellness and Safety, Building Trust and Legitimacy, Policy and Oversight,

and Training and Education. Objectives and strategies were created for each strategic direction. Some objectives related to poverty include increased community engagement by officers, encouraging positive police-citizen interactions, and working with the community and other city departments to reduce crime.

Portsmouth City Community Profile, Ongoing

The Virginia Employment Commission produces community profiles for regions of the Commonwealth, including cities and counties. The reports, available at <https://virginiawlmi.com/>, are automatically updated every week as data is made available. The report for Portsmouth includes profiles on demographic and economic trends. Major trends include declining unemployment rates, declining unemployment insurance payments, and fluctuations in the number of new startup firms per quarter.

ADDRESSING POVERTY IN OTHER CITIES AND STATES

This section provides a brief review of poverty initiatives in other states and cities. These descriptions are intended to highlight the different ways that reducing and alleviating the effects of poverty are viewed in various initiatives. Depending on the organizing and funding entities in each instance, the set up and goals of a city or state-based poverty initiative looks different.

Utah - Intergenerational Poverty Initiative

In 2012, the Utah Legislature adopted the Intergenerational Poverty Mitigation Act, which created a commission to reduce the number of Utah families in the cycle of poverty, improve their quality of life, and help them become economically stable. The commission is run through Utah's Department of Workforce Development, and includes members from the Department of Human Services. The department also guided policy changes, including effective targeting of limited state resources to policies and programs leading to improved outcomes for children experiencing intergenerational poverty. The commission continues to meet regularly and releases an annual report of progress to date. The seventh annual report on Intergenerational Poverty was released in 2018. New indicators were used to identify key findings (e.g. participation in Home Visiting programs, Identification of developmental delays for young children, and IGP tax filers and the Earned Income Tax Credit). The commission believes progress is being made and it is through, "the slow development of an equitable system designed to ensure opportunity for all Utah children." It is also believed that progress is being made through collaboration and alignment of similar goals across several initiatives through the implementation of data-driven policies and programs, such as establishment of measures to track progress, coordination of resources, and support to counties for implementing their plans.

Key findings from the report include:

- Students experiencing intergenerational poverty are closing the high school graduation rate gap between themselves and all Utah students. In 2017, the gap decreased to 12 percent;

- The amount of adults experiencing intergenerational poverty increased 12 percentage points from 2011-2017; and
- In 2017, Utah’s unemployment rate was 3.2 percent and its job growth rate was 3.0 percent.

For more information on this initiative, visit:

<https://jobs.utah.gov/edo/intergenerational/commission.html>

Arizona, Tucson – Mayor’s Poverty Commission

In 2013, the Mayor announced the formation of a citywide Poverty Commission. The Commission would serve as a partnership between the Department of Family Services and the Primavera Foundation. The commission hosted a poverty simulation so that civic leaders could have a better sense of the challenges facing people living in poverty. It also commissioned a study on poverty in Tucson that found that many individuals in poverty would rather scrounge to get by than seek help.¹² The commission also received technical assistance from HUD to begin creating a Coordinated Entry System. The city is now working to end veteran and chronic homelessness. In the Mayor’s 360 progress report, the following progress was identified:

- Sent staff to Rapid Results Boot Camp, a U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness training in rapidly rehousing homeless veterans;
- Convened a Veterans Homelessness Working Group with area service providers, with a goal of placing 52 homeless veterans—chronic and recent—into housing each month;
- Committed to end veteran’s homelessness in Tucson by 2015;
- Researching poverty in Tucson and steps other communities have taken that yield a high return on investment;
- Collaborated with UA College of Social and Behavioral Sciences for students to do a survey, research, and analysis project on poverty in Tucson; and
- Planning a poverty simulation for elected officials, business, and community leaders.¹³

For more information, visit: <https://www.mayorrothschild.com/initiatives/homelessness-and-poverty/>

Florida, Miami – ACCESS Miami

ACCESS Miami stands for Access to Existing Benefits; Access to Capital; Building Wealth and Accumulating Assets; and Improve Financial Literacy. This initiative was developed from an anti-poverty initiative out of the Mayor’s office with a vision of economic opportunity for all residents, program efficiency, and performance outcomes. Additionally, this initiative seeks to provide a citywide, comprehensive empowerment strategy aimed at increasing residents’ access to the financial tools and education that are fundamental to economic prosperity and success. For more information on this initiative, visit:

¹² More information about the Poverty Tucson Project is available at: <https://sociology.arizona.edu/poverty-tucson-project>

¹³ Mayor’s 360 Progress Report: <http://www.mayorrothschild.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/360-Progress-Report.pdf>

<https://www.miamigov.com/Government/Departments-Organizations/Human-Services/ACCESS-Miami>

Michigan - Detroit Partnership on Economic Mobility

In 2017, the University of Michigan and the City of Detroit created the Partnership on Economic Mobility to boost economic mobility and break the cycle of poverty in Detroit. Top priorities of the partnership included: 1) Removing barriers to employment, 2) Leveraging University resources to enhance Detroit initiatives, 3) Providing research and analysis to build on current programs and pilot new ones, and 3) Tracking and evaluating the progress of Detroit initiatives. The poverty alleviation efforts in Detroit have completed 15 projects in Detroit, supported more than 30 projects across the University of Michigan, and have a clear focus in three areas: workforce, housing, and education. As the impact of these data becomes available, the efforts may serve as valuable case studies for Portsmouth's poverty alleviation efforts. For more information about current projects in this initiative, visit:

<http://poverty.umich.edu/projects/projects-in-detroit/>

North Carolina, Fayetteville City - Pathways for Prosperity

A 2015 Harvard University study ranked Fayetteville dead last among the country's 100 largest metropolitan areas in terms of children being able to climb the economic ladder when they become adults. As a result of that study, Fayetteville created Pathways for Prosperity, an initiative to improve opportunities and resources in five focus areas — preschool, public education, affordable housing, life skills and workforce alignment — in eleven of the poorest communities in Fayetteville and Cumberland County. The initiative began as a partnership between organizations such as Communities in Schools, Workforce Development, and Partnership for Children, and is now being supported in part by the City Council and the Cumberland County Board of Commissioners. The initiative launched the action plan, but has not updated the public on key findings thus far. Because the five focus areas align with a comprehensive view of the city, staying close to the key findings of this initiative could be beneficial. For more information on this initiative, visit:

<http://www.fayobserver.com/news/20180507/city-council-backs-poverty-initiative>

New York - ESPRI

In 2016, New York announced that sixteen communities would be chosen to participate in the Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative (ESPRI). This initiative awarded a total of \$25 million dollars to develop locally-driven strategies to increase economic opportunity. The project has two phases; Phase One of the ESPRI is to support administration and planning for the initiative with a Taskforce to make recommendations. Phase Two will fund the implementation of targeted investment strategies that aim to reduce poverty. As a result of this initiative, many New York cities have developed poverty taskforces, began applying for additional funding, and made recommendations for next steps in addressing poverty at the local level. The participating communities are now in various stages of developing and enacting their local recommendations and are expected to announce their individual poverty reduction plans in the coming months. For more information on this initiative, visit:

<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-projects-funded-through-empire-state-poverty-reduction-initiative-9>

Pennsylvania, Lancaster - Transforming Lancaster

In 2015, a report was published highlighting economic opportunities and outcomes in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. This report prompted the city's mayor to create the Mayor's Commission to Combat Poverty, comprised of 11 commissioners and 48 workgroup members. The goal of the commission was to increase local understanding about poverty, recommend policies and practices to help reduce poverty, and produce an action plan for the city's poverty reduction efforts. The action plan resulted in the formation of the following action teams: education, private sector, food security, policy, data analysis, and communications. While the action plan is still in progress, the year-one report indicates the progress on the goals:

- 28 families connected through CAP Navigation and 69 Refugees connected through CWS (goal of 50 by year three);
- 5 affordable rentals and 42 new homeowners (goal of four affordable rentals and five homeowners by year three); and
- Creation of four new community groups and two block captains (goal of one new community group and three block captains by year three).

For more information about the commission and its activities, visit:

<http://combatpovertylancaster.org/commission>

Texas, Dallas - Mayor's Taskforce on Poverty

In 2014, the Mayor of Dallas created a taskforce on poverty chaired by the head of CitySquare, a nonprofit dedicated to fighting poverty. The taskforce was charged with advising the mayor on substantive, short-term plans to take action against poverty within the city. The Task Force recommended focusing on initiatives that lessened blight; taking a leadership role in establishing a higher minimum wage; placing a greater emphasis on early-childhood education; and more investment in encouraging residents to pursue tax credits. Ultimately, the Task Force put forth an implementable action list for the Mayor to pursue that acts like a beginning point for the city in the long-term fight against poverty. For more information on the taskforce, visit: <https://www.citysquare.org/mayor-rawlings-announces-formation-dallas-poverty-task-force/> or <https://www.neighborhoodindicators.org/activities/partner/institute-urban-policy-research-participates-mayors-task-force-poverty>

Virginia, Lynchburg - Thriving City Initiative

In 2017, the Lynchburg, Virginia City Council rebranded its poverty initiative the Thriving City Initiative. This initiative encompassed Poverty to Progress, the Economic Development Work Plan, the Downtown 2040 strategic plan, and the city's project to "reimagine" its community centers. The city created dedicated committees around childcare, education, food disparity, health and mental health, housing, the criminal justice system, Poverty 101, transportation, Pre-K education, and workforce. The city then set aside \$25,000 for projects developed by the committees (up to \$5,000 each) intended to decrease barriers to economic stability. City Council decided to focus the initiative on decreasing the poverty rate in the city between fiscal year 2018 and fiscal year 2022. Committees are working on the following projects:

- Affordable grocery store downtown;

- Welcome Back Packs providing essentials and reentry guides for citizens returning to the community from incarceration;
- Development of an app that facilitates transportation access; and
- Identification of two barriers to food assistance in the city—not knowing where to go for help or being reluctant to ask for help.¹⁴

For more information about this initiative, visit:

https://www.newsadvance.com/news/local/city-council-shifts-poverty-initiative-branding-discusses-strategy/article_4a758b4c-00b5-11e8-9f92-93da29a7f9ee.html

Virginia, Richmond – Anti-Poverty Commission

In 2011, the Mayor of Richmond, Virginia established the Anti-Poverty Commission to provide his Administration with recommendations of poverty reduction tactics that have demonstrable results. The Commission was comprised of community advocates, academics, community leaders, members of the business sector, and other stakeholders. The committee released a report with recommendations in 2013. In 2015, the city passed an ordinance that requires the Mayor of Richmond to file an annual report to City Council and make a presentation at a council meeting each year to provide an update on the city’s progress in the implementation of the comprehensive poverty reduction strategy. The 2018 report overviews changes and results, including:

- The adoption of the Living Wage Model;
- Richmond Area Living Wage Certification Program; and
- Future focus will be on wealth building to expand jobs and higher wages.¹⁵

For more information about the Richmond Anti-Poverty Commission, visit:

<http://www.richmondgov.com/CommunityWealthBuilding/MaggieWalkerInitiativeHistory.aspx>

National - Strong Cities, Strong Communities Initiative

The Strong Cities, Strong Communities (SC2) initiative was first announced in July 2011 and ran through 2015. The initiative’s goal was to strengthen communities by enhancing the capacity of local governments to develop and execute their economic vision and strategies. Expert teams were sent by the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration to work alongside city leadership, community organizations, and local businesses to grow the economy. For more information on the initiative, visit:

<https://www.eda.gov/archives/2016/challenges/sc2challenge/>

¹⁴ Dungan, C. (2018). City Council hears updates on ‘thriving city’ initiatives. The News & Advance, accessed at: https://www.newsadvance.com/news/local/city-council-hears-updates-on-thriving-city-initiatives/article_419ad326-6eb3-11e8-b9f0-cfa817970c97.html

¹⁵ Office of Community Wealth Building, 2018 Annual Report: <http://www.richmondgov.com/CommunityWealthBuilding/documents/2018-CWB-Final-Annual-Report-Mayors-Signature-App-A-B.pdf>

Canada, Edmonton - End Poverty Edmonton

In December 2016, the Edmonton City Council invested in the creation of the End Poverty Edmonton Road Map. This road map provided a community action plan to end poverty and create shared prosperity for the city. In this plan, the City Council developed 400 recommendations, which were developed into the 35 actions. The council then created a community-led organization to steward the implementation of the Road Map. The Edmonton Social Planning Council tracks poverty data points and provides insight to what data points the city is focusing on for the topic of poverty.

Section E: Poverty					80
Low Income After-Tax Measure	Canada	No trend	◆	⊖	81
Proportion of Persons Living in Poverty	CMA	10.5%	↓	⊕	82
Proportion in Low Income by Family Type	CMA	32.2% (Lone Parent Families)	↓	⊕	82
Poverty Gap, Low Income Couple Families	CMA	\$12,886 (Two Children)	◆	⊖	83
Poverty Gap, Low Income Lone-Parent Families	CMA	\$13,312 (Two Children)	◆	⊖	83
Poverty Gap, Low Income Single Adults	CMA	\$8,473	◆	⊖	84
Poverty Gap, Low Income Childless Couples	CMA	\$9,808	◆	⊖	84
Low Income Children	CMA	44,590	↓	⊕	85
Child (0 to 17 Years) Poverty Rate	CMA	15.1%	◆	⊖	85
Children as % of Total Persons in Low Income	CMA	33.2%	◆	⊖	86
Young Children (Under 6 Years) Poverty Rate	City	17.2%	↓	⊕	86

TREND Direction		
↑ Numbers/value increasing	↓ Numbers/value decreasing	◆ Situation stable / No historical trend
TREND Value		
⊕ Positive/Situation Improving	⊖ Negative/situation worsening	⊕ Neutral/positive and negative aspects

Source: Edmonton Social Planning, *Tracking the Trends*, 2018

For more information on this initiative, visit:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/54eb5df3e4b0904aceb80bc4/t/589a059686e6c0878c77366d/1486488984287/EndPovertyEdmonton+Overview+2017.pdf>

PUBLIC INPUT

Every community is different in terms of needs, assets, and priorities. To understand these differences and guide further research on poverty in the community, TPMA sought public input from Portsmouth residents and organizations. The public input process was used to identify what systems and organizations currently address poverty in the city and what related topics the community considered as important in alleviating or preventing poverty. Residents of Portsmouth were invited to complete a brief survey and to attend public forums. In addition, TPMA sought to speak with residents living in poverty and individuals who serve them.

Public Input Forum

On June 21, 2018, TPMA held a public form, which twenty-six members of the general public attended. At the forum, attendees shared ideas and perceptions around six focus areas (employment, education, health, communities, safety, and housing), prioritized ideas in each

focus area, and elaborated on these ideas through a facilitated discussion. The following themes emerged from the forum:

Business Attraction and Retention

Attendees said Portsmouth would benefit from attracting and retaining business, particularly large companies. The need for economic development was mentioned across multiple focus areas. Some participants noted the loss and decline of major companies in recent decades. Other participants felt that, while there are jobs in community, many of them are not well-paying or do not provide a living-wage that can support individuals or families. One attendee said, “We need to find good paying jobs and bring them back into the city. The only employer paying good wages is the shipyard. Most other are service jobs, are bare minimum jobs. You can’t live off them. You need to bring better jobs.”

Education and Workforce Training

Attendees reported that Portsmouth’s education system is not highly regarded. Attendees stressed the need for high quality teachers in the K-12 school system and to ensure all children are educated. Attendees noted multiple related issues that students face including poverty, crime, hunger, safety, and bullying. A few attendees advocated for pre-K and year-round school.

Attendees also said that the city would benefit from training young citizens for the jobs that exist locally. Attendees felt there are opportunities to train individuals to work in the prevalent industries and jobs that existed in the city, including preparing students in high school programs as well as through programs at the local community college.

Commuting

Attendees expressed concerns related to commuting and tolls in Portsmouth. On one hand, residents worry the Elizabeth River Tunnel tolls inhibit people from freely coming into and out of Portsmouth. People who live outside the city do not travel into Portsmouth for fun or to spend money because of the cost of tolls. At the same time, attendees said many individuals commute into Portsmouth for work but do not live in the city. For example, individuals may come to work on the shipyards and return to their home outside of Portsmouth after work without spending additional time or money in the city.

Taxable Land

Attendees said there is a lot of land in Portsmouth that is not taxable because it is owned by a governmental or nonprofit entity. The major employers and industries are governmental entities like the Navy and Coast Guard, which occupy large and valuable portions of the city. Attendees felt this places a heavy tax burden on taxpayers. Additionally, attendees said other properties—including some that used to be taxable—are owned by churches and nonprofit organizations. One attendee said the city is “desperate for economic development to get tax revenue and get the tax base growing.”

Reputation

Attendees spoke about perceptions of Portsmouth, both their own and others’. Attendees felt that Portsmouth’s poor reputation influences decisions by individuals who work in Portsmouth to live elsewhere in the region. Additionally, attendees felt this reputation, along with tolls,

prevents people from the surrounding area from visiting the city. Despite being the geographic center of the Hampton Roads region, attendees said residents from other cities in the region do not come to Portsmouth. One attendee said, “There’s a stigma that goes back decades. This is a beautiful city. I choose to live here. I hear from people who live in the region that this is like Camden, New Jersey. [The reputation] is undeserved, but that coupled with the ratings of the school system and lack of availability of jobs causes problems.”

Housing Authority and Oasis Client & Staff Input



TPMA conducted focus groups at PHRA communities. One was attended by PHRA staff, and the second was attended by residents. TPMA visited Oasis during a lunch meal and had one-on-one conversations with individuals. During the focus groups and discussions, participants were asked to select the top issues of concern for them and their family. Health, Housing, Jobs, Safety, Education, and Transportation were the provided options. On the left is a summary of the priorities of those who participated, with

housing being selected as the overall topic concern.

Housing

Housing was the top concern among participants, particularly those attending the lunch at Oasis. For some participants, the issue on their mind was moving out of public housing. PHRA explained that residents have their own goals, and for some that goal is moving out of public housing, even if they plan to stay longer to save more money. For other participants, the housing issue was the basic need of housing met. One participant said, “If you have housing, you are going to be safe. Everything falls under housing.”

Education

Education was identified by participants as a requirement to obtain stable employment with a living wage. Some spoke of a lack of education as a barrier for older individuals. Other spoke of the need to mentor and motivate young persons to seek and complete an education, including shorter-term trades training. Additionally, some mentioned needing to focus on other types of education, like sexual health or financial education.

Health

Participants spoke about physical health, mental health, lifestyle, and substance abuse, and about how each is related to employment. On the topic of physical health and lifestyle, one participant said, “If you are not living a healthy lifestyle, it can affect your ability to stay at work.” Staff also mentioned referring and connecting residents to mental health agency partners. Staff have seen depression become a barrier for some residents trying to become or remain employed. At the same time, losing a job can affect their mental health and ability to obtain prescribed medication.

Transportation

Residents reported using the public transportation system and/or friends and family to get around the city. A few reported not having a phone or regular access to a computer, making it difficult to stay up-to-date with route changes or requesting rides from others. Some reported that in order to have a job, a person generally needs to have a car in order to ensure getting to their place of employment reliably.

Jobs

Related to jobs, participants mentioned the cost of children. PHRA staff reported that for some parents with multiple children, childcare, along with other basic needs, can cost them more than they earn. Some working parents use alternative child care services like family members. Childcare is seen as a barrier for not only getting and maintaining a job, but also for getting an education.

Safety

Safety was rated as a top concern for only two participants. However, one resident said she feels most safe and secure inside her home and does not let her grandson play outside often.

Faith Community Focus Group

TPMA attended a gathering of faith community leaders to discuss community needs and service gaps, as well as to identify areas in which churches and other faith communities are working to address poverty in Portsmouth.

Current Work

Leaders from the faith community described partnering with Oasis to raise money to provide Thanksgiving and Christmas meals, and doing coat and food drives to help provide for families in need. Some faith leaders also attend City Council, School Board, and other public meetings to weigh in on issues that are important to the Portsmouth community. The faith communities that mentioned specific programs described primarily working with partner agencies to provide youth-serving programs such as mentoring, sports leagues, or summer jobs projects.

Issues of Interest

Faith leaders noted actions would be beneficial for the individuals living in or near poverty in their communities including mentoring programs, financial management classes, and skill-specific workforce training programs. These leaders reported being worried about the effects of living in or growing up near distressed housing areas and about not having enough police officers to address the behaviors happening in high-crime neighborhoods. Additionally, they stated that families needed to be educated not just about academics but also about standards of living and how to appropriately care for their family members.

When asked about addressing poverty at the community level, faith leaders acknowledged that poverty is a big issue and it is not possible to address all parts at once. They described needing a long-term, multi-pronged approach, and were interested to know more about the city's future plans so they could come together with the city to support and achieve their goals.

Public Input Survey

TPMA launched a survey on June 6, 2018 to collect public input about the causes and correlations of poverty. TPMA worked with the Miles Agency to promote the online survey through traditional media and collecting paper survey responses during events in Portsmouth. In January 2019, the survey was reopened, and a handful of responses were collected by TPMA through paper surveys distributed during lunch at Oasis.

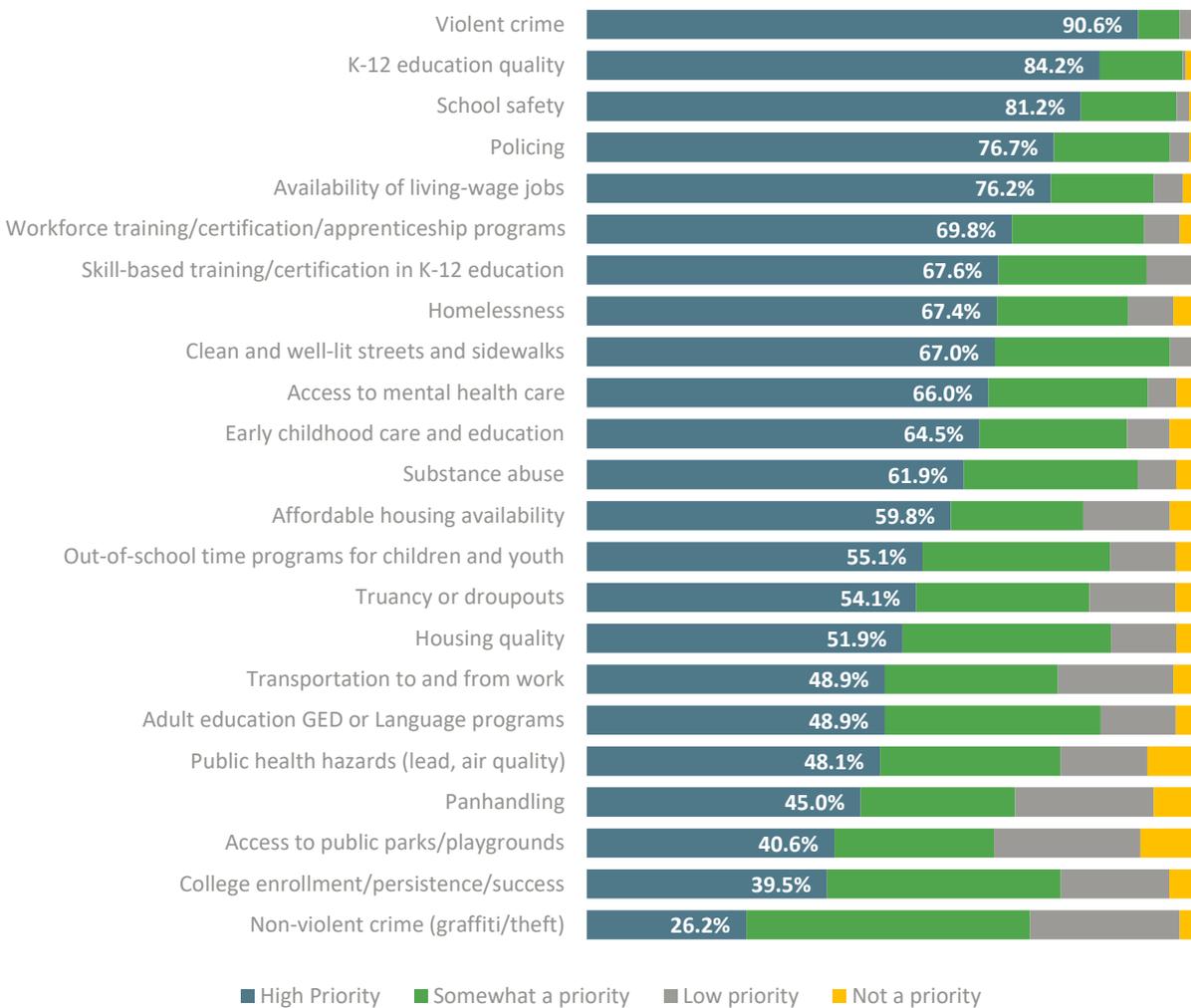
209 residents of Portsmouth took the survey. 77.1% of respondents had lived in Portsmouth for more than ten years. 8.8% of respondents currently receive TANF, WIC, free school lunches, or SNAP. Respondents were asked to what extent the city should prioritize a list of 23 poverty-related issue areas.

Violent Crime

The vast majority (90.6%) of survey respondents said the city should place high priority on violent crime, but only 26.2% said non-violent crime should be a high priority. School safety and policing were other safety issues rated by respondents as high priorities.

Education and Workforce

Respondents also said the city should place a high priority on K-12 education quality. 84.2% of respondents said the city should prioritize it highly, and an additional 13.6% said it should be somewhat prioritized. Other related education issues were rated highly including school safety, workforce training, and skill-based training in K-12 education.



Suggestions to Address Poverty

Respondents were asked what the city should do to address poverty. Themes that arose from this survey were similar to themes discussed at the public input forum around economic development, education and workforce training, and commuting. A large proportion of responses were about providing high-quality education and training for jobs and careers that exist locally. Additionally, respondents made suggestions related to housing, including providing shelters and housing for homeless individuals and improving availability of affordable housing. Examples of suggestions made by respondents are provided below:

- “Poverty needs to be addressed as a comprehensive strategy to set goals and achievements in the following areas: *Early childhood education *Parenting skills *Affordable housing *Work skill development/training *Working with the business community to create living wage job opportunities”
- “Provide a living wage to all city employees.”
- “Education is the key for long term success. We have to find creative ways to teach children at an early age that learning can be fun and as they get older, we need to be

sure they are being taught self-worth and that they can accomplish anything they work hard to achieve.”

- “Assign the highest priority to crime prevention and keeping neighborhoods well-lit and maintained. Ensure that Juvenile Crimes are prosecuted consistently. Work diligently on comprehensive substance abuse programs.”
- “[T]ry as a city to work more effectively with the different agencies (i.e., behavioral health, social services, economic development, housing and most importantly the public school system). The coming together of faith-based groups could also help with this growing issue in Portsmouth.”
- “I think Portsmouth should open a shelter all around season not just in the winter.”
- “Citizens must first have a sense of pride within their city and place of habitation. That sense of pride will carry them into becoming "expert citizens" of their own city, reclaiming their streets and steering their own aspirations.”

There were some differences in the perspectives and priorities of people living poverty, those who interact with those in poverty, and other members of the public. Those in poverty placed more emphasis on housing, health, and transportation and less emphasis on safety. Most people spoke of the need for quality education and its importance for getting a job. These differences and similarities should be taken into consideration as the City Council and a poverty taskforce create policies.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PORTSMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

Based on the research collected from community members, local research reports, and state and national data sources, TPMA presents the following recommendations for consideration by the Portsmouth City Council. A bulleted list of recommendations is available immediately below, while the following sections provide supporting documentation for each recommendation. The recommendations in this section are built specifically for the City Council. The next section of the report provides additional recommendations for the Taskforce to consider as they begin addressing the issue of poverty in Portsmouth.

1. Create and Support a Poverty Taskforce
2. Increase the City's Capacity to Apply for State and National Funds
3. Ensure No Portsmouth City Employee Earns Sub-Poverty Wages
4. Actively Engage with Regional Partners
5. Incorporate Poverty Alleviation into City Funding Processes
6. Identify and Implement Policy Changes that could Affect Poverty
7. Strengthen the City's Relationship with Portsmouth Public Schools
8. Work with Media Outlets to Build a Positive City Narrative

1. Create and Support a Poverty Taskforce

TPMA recommends that the City Council create a Poverty Taskforce with clear goals around making specific policy recommendations to City Council annually and piloting new evidence-based practices in collaboration with existing organizations. This Taskforce may be comprised of multiple subcommittees such as Education, Workforce, Social Services, and/or Crime/Policing.

The charge of the Taskforce and its subcommittees would be threefold: 1) to annually recommend policy changes that would positively impact individuals in poverty in Portsmouth, 2) to collaboratively seek out and apply for new funding sources (specifically federal and state government sources) to address poverty through current agencies and programs, and 3) to identify gaps in services and pilot new programs, services, or organizations to address those gaps.

To ensure the Poverty Taskforce is able to fulfill its charge, the City Council should consider the following supporting action steps:

1. Hire a dedicated **Poverty Manager** in the City Manager's Office to oversee and coordinate all City anti-poverty efforts, including the Taskforce. Coordination includes planning Taskforce committee meetings (including logistics and creating agendas), documenting decisions and actions of the Taskforce and its subcommittees, and conducting follow-up on tasks committee members agreed to complete. Additionally, the Poverty Taskforce Manager would be responsible for ensuring the Taskforce submitted any required reports or recommendations to the City Council and could assist in the coordination of information and writing around grant opportunities that the Taskforce and its subcommittees pursue. This position should have enough clout to engage high-level leadership from a variety of organizations and agencies in conversations about poverty alleviation in the city.

2. Require the City Manager's Office to **annually provide a report** to City Council and make a presentation at a council meeting on the Taskforce's progress. These reports and presentations can inform the City Council about ways to support the poverty initiative, including recommendations of ordinance and policy changes as well as updates on new funding opportunities and the uses of any funds that are allocated to address poverty through Taskforce-generated ideas.
3. **Measure progress** by selecting one to five data indicators to examine annually to evaluate city-wide changes in poverty rates or effects. Community-level indicators provide an objective way to measure changes and can help guide decision-making. The indicators should be relevant, regularly available, and reliable. For example, the Taskforce could track the city's overall poverty rate, homelessness numbers, median wage, and state and federal funding per capita.
4. Research into other city's poverty initiatives showed that many places incentivized the work of a Taskforce by providing funding for the ideas generated by the committees working to address poverty. TPMA recommends Portsmouth set up a similar system wherein a **specific budget is set aside** for Taskforce-generated small pilot projects. Taskforce subcommittees could apply to use the funds through the Poverty Taskforce Manger either as opportunities arise, or once a year at a certain time. Based on the size and scale of the small pilot projects in other cities, TPMA recommends setting aside at least \$25,000 to \$50,000 annually for this fund and offering amounts of \$5,000 to \$12,000 for each subcommittee to implement new projects.
5. Include at least one individual on each Taskforce subcommittee who provides **direct services** to low-income individuals and families. While it is important to leaders and decision makers from department and community organizations on the Taskforce, direct support staff can provide unique perspective and insight to the impact (both positive and negative) on individuals living in or near poverty.

2. Increase the City's Capacity to Apply for State and National Funds

A variety of state and national funding sources provide grants and other funding for cities to address social and economic issues. As Portsmouth moves forward in addressing poverty, it will be important that the City is receiving and effectively utilizing the largest dollar amount possible from federal and state funding sources.

TPMA recommends increasing the City's ability to seek out and apply for state and national funds in partnership with the city departments such as Department of Social Services; Department of Behavioral Healthcare Services; Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism; Planning Department, and Police Department; as well as with the Portsmouth Health Department and nonprofit organizations in the community. Portsmouth also may partner with leaders in state agencies to bring state-funded pilot programs and local, place-based initiatives into Portsmouth.

Increasing the City's capacity to find and respond to these funding opportunities may look like hiring additional grant writers or grant managers, and/or establishing poverty-specific goals for the current grants office or City Manager's Office to reach. A list of potential grant opportunities that the City of Portsmouth may look into is available in Appendix D. Searching

for additional sources of funding also is mentioned in the [Poverty Taskforce Recommendations](#) below.

3. Ensure Full-Time Portsmouth City Employees Earn Living Wages

Whether working full- or part-time, employed individuals can still experience effects of poverty. An inability to maintain a quality of living despite being employed indicates a disparity between wages and cost of living in Portsmouth for some residents. As an employer in the community, the City of Portsmouth should ensure its employees earn at least more than poverty wages and ideally earn a living wage to support their families.

Federal poverty guidelines are based on the number of individuals in a household. In 2018, these guidelines defined poverty as earning below \$12,140 for households with one person and \$16,460 for households with two persons (e.g., a single parent household with one child).

A living wage is the amount of earnings needed to cover a household’s cost for food, child care, medical expenses, housing, transportation, and taxes. A household’s living wage changes based on the number of adults working and children, and a household with a non-working adult does not pay child care cost. For example, according to the MIT Living Wage Calculator, a typical Portsmouth family of two adults (with one working) and one child would need to spend \$50,569 on basic necessities on an annual basis.¹⁶ For a family of one adult supporting one child, a family would need to spend \$55,889.

For some residents, these spending levels exceed their earnings. The following table shows median earnings for full-time workers in Portsmouth by type of worker.¹⁷ The median wage for local government workers falls well below a living wage for a single parent family. However, a household with two working would together earn enough to support a family.

Class of Worker	Median Earnings of Full-Time, Year-Round Employees
Local government	\$37,447
State government	\$58,765
Federal government	\$61,028
Private for profit	\$34,517
Private nonprofit	\$42,996

Additionally, the median earnings for full-time workers in occupations related to local government also fall below a living wage for a single parent family or for a family with two working parents and 3 or more children (\$41,205 each).¹⁸

Occupation	Median Earnings of Full-Time, Year-Round Employees
Protective Service Occupations	\$35,883

¹⁶ Average Household Spending for Family of Two Adults and One Child in Portsmouth, VA. Source: MIT Living Wage Calculator based on The MIT Living Wage Calculator can be found at <http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/51740>. The data reflected in this report was pulled on March 19, 2019.

¹⁷ Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 2017 1-year estimates tables S2419

¹⁸ Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 2017 1-year estimates tables S2414

Education, Training, and Library Occupations	\$38,102
Community and Social Services Occupations	\$36,848

The salary schedule for the City of Portsmouth’s general employees is outlined in an annual Classification and Pay Plan. In reviewing the FY2019 salary schedule, the minimum salary in grade 8 (the lowest grade listed), is effectively equal to a poverty wage for a single person living alone at \$16,658.¹⁹ The midrange salary for a Portsmouth city employee does not reach a living wage for a single parent household until salary grade 25. Positions in salary grade 25 include (but are not limited to): Accounting Coordinator, Automotive Mechanic Supervisor, Building Inspector, Chief Deputy City Clerk, Museum Curator, Principal Engineering Inspector, Psychiatric Nurse, and Sewers and Drains Supervisor. Firefighters and police officers earn salaries between \$42,500 and \$68,850.

There have been efforts to boost wages of city employees in lower pay grades. In 2018, city employees making less than \$30,000 annually received a flat dollar increase of at least \$1,500 based on years of service in their current position, as a living wage adjustment. Additionally, the City has examined pay for both teachers and police officers over the past 3 years to bring the City’s pay into alignment with other nearby communities. The results of these efforts are reflected in the FY 2019 rates shown in the paragraph above.

4. Actively Engage with Regional Partners

Like most complex issues facing communities, challenges related to poverty span municipal boundaries. To address the underlying conditions and effects of poverty, Portsmouth will need to work with regional partners and be seen as a willing and capable partner. This requires both thinking and acting regionally.

Portsmouth is part of a regional economy that shares workforce, industries, and service assets. Ensuring individuals gain skills, find jobs, can travel to their employer, and have housing options cannot be effectively done by one leader or community. Communities need to think regionally to overcome common challenges. The Brookings Institute found that an emerging principle in modern regional collaboration is to unify leaders around economic growth and inclusion.²⁰ However, thinking regionally still includes being place-sensitive, which means ensuring struggling residents and neighborhoods are included in regional efforts. It is important for Portsmouth to both participate at the regional level to attract and retain nearby resources, but also to find its own niche where Portsmouth can be an attractive partner for investment.

Thinking regionally is a start, but acting regionally is more difficult. Gathering leaders and entities together and agreeing on shared challenges and solutions requires time and resources. Acting on solutions requires ongoing commitment. Portsmouth and local organizations should be an active partner in existing regional efforts and spend the time necessary to participate in meetings and projects. One step can be to offer to host regional meetings within Portsmouth

¹⁹ Source: 2018 Poverty Guides from U.S. Department of Health & Human Services can be found at <https://aspe.hhs.gov/2018-poverty-guidelines>

²⁰ <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2018/02/22/a-modern-case-for-regional-collaboration/>

and provide initiative leadership when possible. Portsmouth should be involved with organizations such as ReInvest Hampton Roads and ensure alignment with the GO Virginia initiatives for Region 5.

TPMA also recommends considering the City's relationships with the philanthropic sector that spans the region. Gaining the trust of regional organizations like the United Way of South Hampton Roads can help Portsmouth be a collaborative partner on future projects or initiatives, and over time provide better supports to residents.

5. Incorporate Poverty Alleviation into City Funding Processes

Portsmouth already supports a variety of social programming that either directly or indirectly address poverty, such as through Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding and the Department of Social Services; Department of Behavioral Healthcare Services; Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism; and Portsmouth Public Schools. To incentivize a greater focus on programs and services that address poverty within these organizations, the City may consider a poverty alleviation component as part of its funding processes.

As the City's annual budget is developed, departments with poverty-related programs should provide information about the poverty-related outcomes of their programs. The City Manager, the Budget Team, and departments should have discussions about ways to improve poverty alleviation efforts through their programming. Departments should engage in questions like 1) are the programs serving the right individuals, 2) is the program based in research, and 3) can the department better serve individuals living in poverty. The City should require that city-funded programs that address poverty be based in research about what works to either decrease the rate of individuals living in poverty or mitigate the negative consequences that have been shown to be correlated with living in poverty.

For outside organizations, the process could be two-fold: 1) use the RFP process to uncover new opportunities to incorporate poverty-focused programming into existing agencies and programs and 2) require funded programs to be based on research proving that the intervention effectively addresses the intended outcomes. This entails examining any RFP the City releases and, where appropriate, adding in a requirement that whoever applies address poverty in some way using an evidence-based program or approach. The City may choose to identify specific poverty-based programming agencies must incorporate, or leave it open to any intervention that has been proven to work using resources like those described below.

There are a variety of research centers that provide valuable information about what has been shown to work to address poverty in programs of all kinds. For example, the U.S. Departments of Labor,²¹ Education,²² Health and Human Services,²³ Justice,²⁴ and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration²⁵ all have "What Works" clearinghouses that provide

²¹ For more information, visit: <https://clear.dol.gov/>

²² For more information, visit: <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>

²³ For more information, visit: <https://youth.gov/evidence-innovation/program-directory>

²⁴ For more information, visit: <https://whatworks.csgjusticecenter.org/> and <https://www.crimesolutions.gov/> and <https://www.ojjdp.gov/mpg/>

²⁵ For more information, visit: <https://www.samhsa.gov/ebp-resource-center>

information about successful research-informed programs. Additionally, Child Trends has a “What Works” database that overviews research-based practices in child and youth programming by age, program type, or intended outcome. Organizations like the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities,²⁶ CityLab,²⁷ and the National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP)²⁸ also provide information about programs and practices that have been shown to work to address poverty.

6. Identify and Implement Policy Changes that Could Affect Poverty

TPMA suggests formally requesting recommendations from city departments (such as Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services; Police Department; Department of Public Utilities; and Planning Department) regarding policies that would help their department better address the causes of poverty in Portsmouth and/or alleviate the impact on residents living in poverty.

One possible policy change is to connect residents owing city debt with financial counseling or coaching services. Being unable to pay basic expenses like utility bills can be a sign that families are financially unstable. City departments such as Public Utilities that impose fees have an opportunity to identify struggling families and to empower them by connecting them to a local organization that provides financial literacy and services. The National League of Cities (NLC) piloted a model called Local Interventions for Financial Empowerment Through Utility Payments (LIFT-UP) in five cities across the country.²⁹

Another example is for Marketing and Communications to help raise awareness among residents about the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). The EITC is a refundable tax credit that can give families a substantial financial boost and help them achieve more financial stability. NLC recommend cities use “bully pulpit” and communication mechanisms (e.g., public events, website, and social media) to promote the EITC widely and inform residents about where they can obtain free tax preparation services.³⁰ In addition, NLC recommends developing a citywide plan to expand the number of income tax assistance locations and trained volunteers.

Conversations with the Police Department’s Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) highlighted the need for new or different repercussions for loitering and other low-level disruptive behavior often associated with the population of homeless or nonworking individuals. Some homeless or low-income individuals who are charged for these crimes are unable to pay, thus the current system of negative reinforcement through fines is not a meaningful deterrent for destructive behaviors.

Lastly, the City Council should consider policy and ordinance changes recommended by the Poverty Taskforce. As the Taskforce and its subcommittees study research and possible solutions, the City should act on their recommendations.

²⁶ For more information, visit: <https://www.cbpp.org/what-works-to-reduce-poverty>

²⁷ For more information, visit: <https://www.citylab.com/equity/2018/01/moving-americans-out-of-poverty-will-take-more-than-money/551246/>

²⁸ For more information, visit: <http://www.nccp.org/>

²⁹ For more information, visit <https://www.nlc.org/local-interventions-for-financial-empowerment-through-utility-payments-lift-up-0>

³⁰ For more information, visit https://www.nlc.org/sites/default/files/users/user28/YEF%20EITC%20Brief_02.pdf

7. Strengthen the City's Relationship with Portsmouth Public Schools

Throughout the course of this project, TPMA was unable to have a conversation with a representative from Portsmouth Public Schools. The relationship between the City and the school district was described as strained and political. TPMA recommends the City Council intentionally engage with school leaders around shared goals and beliefs and seek a common understanding of current efforts to serve students living in poverty. TPMA also recommends working with school leaders to incentivize additional wrap-around or social service support, as well as collaboration with other community organizations through the next budget cycle.

Other communities have shown the possibilities of collaboration between the city, public schools, and community organizations. For example, The Seamless Educational Partnership was formed in Long Beach, California in 1994. At the time, Long Beach was facing economic and demographic challenges, including a declining Navy and aircraft industry and increases in students with low-income backgrounds. At the urging of city officials, the leaders from the public school district and local higher education institutions developed a partnership. In its early stages, the partnership focused on improving communication. Since then, the collaboration has grown and continues today with ongoing projects around college readiness and access.

Seamless Education partners identified key elements to their success:³¹

- **Broad-based Community Demand for Improvement.** Partners advise other communities to “start small” and focus on opening up communication between the school district, local community college, and public and private universities to identify common needs. In addition, local government and business leaders as well as other key stakeholder groups are often a place to call the community together and make education a priority for community.
- **Strong, Long-term Leadership.** This includes open communication between all partners, demonstrating a commitment to the initiative through attendance and involvement, setting goals, and supporting school district leaders.
- **Turnover-Proof Initiatives.** Despite turnover of original leaders, the Seamless Education Partnership has grown by ensuring institutional support and relying on broad-based community support.
- **Media Involvement.** Long Beach leaders developed relationships with their local media, which resulted in coverage of the effort and increased public awareness.

Another example of a partnership between local government, public school, and community organizations is the Petersburg City and School Partnership in Virginia.³² The superintendent of Petersburg City Public Schools and the Petersburg city manager lead the partnership, and the United Way of Great Richmond & Petersburg serves as the partnership's backbone and

³¹ Improving Education Through Collaboration. A Case Study of the Long Beach Seamless Education Partnership. For more information, see http://www.longbeachcollegepromise.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/BHEF_LB_Partnership_Report.pdf

³² For more information, see <https://www.petersburg.k12.va.us/domain/2266>.

employs the partnership director. In addition, a steering committee made up of leaders in various roles throughout Petersburg guides the partnership.

8. Work with Media Outlets to Build a Positive City Narrative

The City of Portsmouth has a communications staff in place in the City Manager's Office. However, there remains a negative self-image of the city within its citizenry, as well as a negative public image of Portsmouth within the region. A negative public image can hinder business and talent attraction and discourage residents from surrounding communities to visit and spend time and money within Portsmouth.

TPMA recommends the City's Communications and Marketing staff work intentionally with local and regional news outlets to be open and transparent about negative press and the City's positive responses to emerging issues, as well as to proactively highlight unique assets and attributes within the city. An effective working relationship with the media is important for public transparency and dispersal of important information. California's Institute for Local Government created a resource³³ for working with reporters and making stories newsworthy. The resource advises city officials to be responsive to deadlines; be prepared with information, facts, and key messages; be accessible and friendly; be concise with statements; and be proactive. Related to being proactive, the resource covers what makes something worthy of coverage. While controversy and conflict are the most common elements, city officials can proactively bring media storylines that have a human interest element and changes or new policies that have the potential to positively affect residents.

³³ To view resource, visit
https://www.nmvrc.org/Documents/media_relations_tips_for_newly_elected_officials_march_2014_0.pdf

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PORTSMOUTH POVERTY TASKFORCE

Once the Portsmouth Poverty Taskforce is formed, TPMA recommends focusing on the following topics based on the research collected as part of this Poverty Study. These recommendations have been separated by topic area; this report provides a brief description of key issues within each topic, then provides a set of four to six recommendations for further action. The topic areas are: Education, Workforce, Social Services, and Crime/Policing.

Education

1. Improve access to high quality early care and education.
2. Increase student access to social-emotional counselors in schools.
3. Promote school attendance among students, parents, and other family members.
4. Increase availability of CTE programs that focus on in-demand jobs in Portsmouth.

Workforce

1. Examine local labor market data to determine areas of high need and growth.
2. Increase the number of apprenticeship programs available in Portsmouth companies.
3. Work with regional transportation partners to help employees get to and from work.
4. Support neighborhood associations in making Portsmouth an attractive place to live.
5. Support and incentivize local entrepreneurship for Portsmouth residents.

City Services

1. Apply for additional state and federal funding for new or expanded social programming.
2. Improve the availability of affordable housing.
3. Support a system of collaborative administration of social services.
4. Increase resident access to home ownership support services.

Crime/Policing

1. Consider daytime programming to engage adults between feeding and shelter program service times.
2. Implement alternatives to detention for non-violent offenses.
3. Continue and/or expand positive neighborhood engagement by police.
4. Deter panhandling at key locations by providing alternative donation options.
5. Apply for additional state and federal funding for crime prevention programming.

Education

A total of 22,490 children ages 0-17 live in Portsmouth. More than half are economically disadvantaged (live below 200% of the federal poverty level), and 30% live in poverty.³⁴ The effects of poverty on brain development start early and are seen even in infancy.³⁵ Research has shown that children growing up in poverty have worse academic, social, and economic

³⁴ Kids Count Data Center. Annie E. Casey Foundation. Retrieved from: <https://datacenter.kidscount.org>

³⁵ Blair, C. and Raver, C. C. (2016) Academy of Pediatrics. Retrieved from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5765853/>

outcomes than their peers.³⁶ However, it also has shown that providing social and educational supports for children can reduce the effects of poverty on their life outcomes.³⁷ These programs can range from early childhood education opportunities to in school and out of school supports for children throughout their academic career.

In Portsmouth, 18.0% of young children are already falling behind academically in kindergarten (according to 2017-18 PALS-K scores).³⁸ Additionally, 3.6% of students in grades K-3 were held back and had to repeat a year of school,³⁹ while 35% of 3rd graders failed to pass the third grade Reading Subject Standards of Learning (SOL).⁴⁰ For economically disadvantaged students, Portsmouth Public Schools performed worst in the Hampton Roads region in 2016, with only 55.4% passing the SOL compared to 62.3% for Virginia overall.⁴¹

Students' social-emotional needs also are not being fully met in Portsmouth. A 2017 study by Old Dominion University collected input on crime from the Police Department, health and human services providers, and high school students and teachers. This study found that both physical and emotional safety for students and teachers needs to be addressed in Portsmouth Public Schools.⁴²

This may be due in part to low participation and engagement in education among students and families. Portsmouth has ranked near the top of the region in chronic absenteeism⁴³ over the past three year, and in AY2017 was highest in the Hampton Roads region at 16.4 %, compared to 10.6% in Virginia overall.⁴⁴

Additionally, Portsmouth does not have a technical/vocational-specific high school, although Portsmouth Public Schools does provide career and technical education (CTE). All three high schools offer a Dual Enrollment program that is a partnership with Tidewater Community College allowing students to earn college credit while in high school. Additionally, the Portsmouth Public Schools offer the following CTE certifications:

- Microsoft, Adobe, and Apple Certifications
- Certified Nurse Aid
- Greenhouse Operations Certificate and Registered Technician Pesticide Applicators License
- Nail Technician
- Customer Service Specialist

³⁶ Stallen, M. (2017) Article on Poverty and the Developing Brain for the Behavioral Scientist. Retrieved from: <https://behavioralscientist.org/can-neuroscientists-help-us-understand-fight-effects-childhood-poverty/>

³⁷ Pediatrics (2016) Policy Statement from the American Academy of Pediatrics. Retrieved from: <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/137/4/e20160339>

³⁸ Kids Count Data Center, Annie E. Casey Foundation. Retrieved from: <https://datacenter.kidscount.org>

³⁹ Kids Count Data Center, Annie E. Casey Foundation. Retrieved from: <https://datacenter.kidscount.org>

⁴⁰ Kids Count Data Center, Annie E. Casey Foundation. Retrieved from: <https://datacenter.kidscount.org>

⁴¹ Kids Count Data Center, Annie E. Casey Foundation. Retrieved from: <https://datacenter.kidscount.org>

⁴² Old Dominion University (2017) Portsmouth Public Safety Needs Assessment for the Crime and Violence Reversal Initiative.

⁴³ Students missing 10% or more of days enrolled.

⁴⁴ Kids Count Data Center, Annie E. Casey Foundation. Retrieved from: <https://datacenter.kidscount.org>

- Certified Personal Trainer
- Certified Broadcast Technologist
- Certified Television Operator
- Media Composer Certification
- Professional Communications Certification
- Workplace Readiness & Career Readiness Certifications

However, jobs in journalism/media, computer design, and communications are not readily available for entry-level applicants within Portsmouth or within a reasonable commuting distance of the city.⁴⁵

Across the board, it is important to support children in poverty academically, socially, and in finding a career path that will lead them to a thriving future. The recommendations below may help Portsmouth leaders address some of the holes that currently exist in the system of service for the city's youngest residents.

Recommendations

Improve access to high quality early care and education. Investment in high quality early education generates significant economic⁴⁶ and individual benefits in areas such as cognitive skills, academic achievement, and socio-emotional well-being.⁴⁷ Improving access to high quality early care and education may require a variety of tactics including increasing slots in high quality care settings, raising awareness about the value of quality care amongst families with young children, or increasing training and technical assistance opportunities for individuals running early care and education programs.

Increase student access to social-emotional counselors in schools. Student counselor ratios have a significant correlation with lower student absenteeism, higher standardized test scores, higher graduation rates, and fewer suspensions.⁴⁸ These ratios are particularly important for improving outcomes amongst students in high-poverty schools.⁴⁹ Increasing student access to this valuable resource may be addressed through policy, financial incentives, grant funding, or partnership with local social work or mental health organizations.

Promote school attendance among students, parents, and other family members. Even as young as kindergarten, absenteeism is associated with greater absenteeism in subsequent years and

⁴⁵ There are only 25 annual job openings for Media and Communication Workers (SOC 27-3000) in Portsmouth, and only 433 annual job openings for the 3,384 Media and Communication Workers living within a 45-minute drive from Portsmouth. In both regions, more of these workers commute out than in to find jobs. Source: Emsi, 2019.2

⁴⁶ Lynch, R. G. (2007) Enriching Children, Enriching the Nation. Economic Policy Institute.

⁴⁷ Isaacs, J. B. and Roessel, E. (2008). Impacts of Early Childhood Programs. Brookings. Retrieved from: <https://www.brookings.edu/research/impacts-of-early-childhood-programs/>

⁴⁸ Parzych, J., Donohue, P., Gaesser, A., Chiu, M. (2019). Measuring the impact of school counselor ratios on student outcomes. ASCA Research Report. Retrieved from: www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Publications/Research-Release-Parzych.pdf

⁴⁹ Lapan, R. T., Gysbers, N. C., Bragg, S., & Pierce, M. E. (2012). Missouri professional school counselors: Ratios matter, especially in high-poverty schools. *Professional School Counseling*, 16 (2), 108-116. doi: 10.1177/2156759X0001600207

lower achievement in first grade reading, math, and general knowledge.⁵⁰ By ninth grade, attendance is significantly correlated with high school graduation.⁵¹ Every Student Every Child is a national initiative to address chronic absenteeism that recommends generating an act on absenteeism data and deploying positive messaging to families about the value of regular school attendance.⁵²

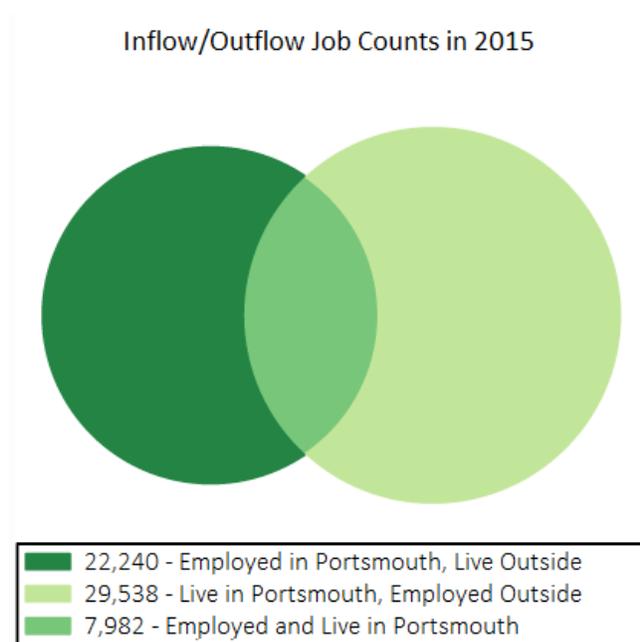
Increase availability of CTE programs that focus on in-demand jobs in Portsmouth. The research in the workforce section of these Taskforce Recommendations shows that there is a mismatch between the jobs Portsmouth residents are prepared for and the jobs available in the city. While the community college does have multiple programs to prepare youth for in-demand jobs, it also may be valuable for middle and high school personnel to intentionally introduce students to high-paying, locally available career pathways.

Workforce

Portsmouth’s population of workers and Portsmouth residents are two relatively distinct groups of individuals. Very few people both live and work in Portsmouth (7,982); the majority either live in Portsmouth and work elsewhere (22,240), or work in Portsmouth and live elsewhere (29,538). As a point of comparison, only 21.3% of Portsmouth residents work within the City of Portsmouth, but 39.6% of Norfolk residents work within the City of Norfolk.⁵³

This high dependence on commuting could pose a problem for those residents of Portsmouth who do not possess a car. Within Portsmouth, the percentage of households with more workers than cars—meaning that workers need to either carpool or find another means of getting to work—is 15.2%, a figure much higher than that of neighboring regions. This poses a problem for Portsmouth residents, as only 3.4% of residents take public transportation to work.⁵⁴

In addition, the large influx of workers from outside the city may mean that Portsmouth workers are missing out on economic opportunities. While Portsmouth jobs are disproportionately filled by non-Portsmouth residents in general, this is especially true for



⁵⁰ Romero, M., and Lee, Y. (2007). A National Portrait of Chronic Absenteeism in the Early Grades. New York, NY: The National Center for Children in Poverty.

⁵¹ Allensworth, E., and Easton, J.Q. (2005). The On-Track Indicator as a Predictor of High School Graduation. Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research.

⁵² Every Student Every Day. Retrieved from: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/chronicabsenteeism/toolkit.pdf>

⁵³ U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics. Inflow/Outflow Report.

⁵⁴ U.S. Census Bureau ACS 1-YR. (2016). Commuting Characteristics by Sex.

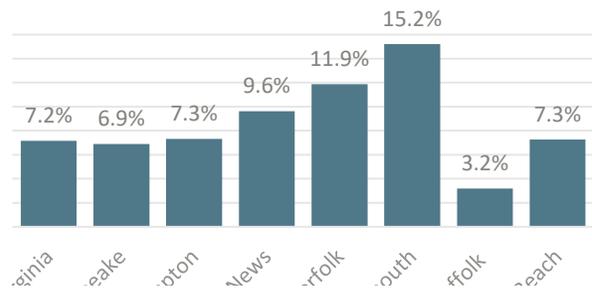
Portsmouth’s high-paying jobs. As a point of comparison, the portion of jobs filled by Norfolk residents within that city is roughly the same for all income categories.⁵⁵

Perhaps as a result, workers in search of high-paying jobs are predominantly going outside the city to obtain them. As the chart to the right demonstrates, Portsmouth residents who work outside the city more frequently obtain high paying jobs than those who work within the city.⁵⁶

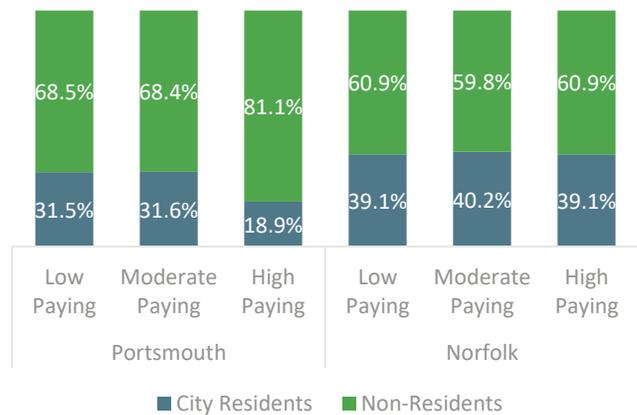
This dichotomy, where residents leave the city to obtain higher-wage jobs and workers come into the city for higher-wage jobs, suggests that there may be a mismatch between the skills and interests of the local workforce and the jobs available in the city. This may be due in part to the fact that the jobs available in Portsmouth are highly concentrated in the Government sector, with 48.5% of all available jobs in the city falling in this category.⁵⁷ For example, while there are 1,069 Sailors, Captains, and Ship Engineers employed in Portsmouth only 45.8% are Portsmouth residents.⁵⁸

To address the current workforce conditions in Portsmouth, it will be important to focus simultaneously on 1) matching the skillsets of the incoming workforce to the in-demand careers/jobs in the city, 2) increasing the number of jobs available in non-government or ship building industries, and 3) improving perceptions of Portsmouth as a great place to live.

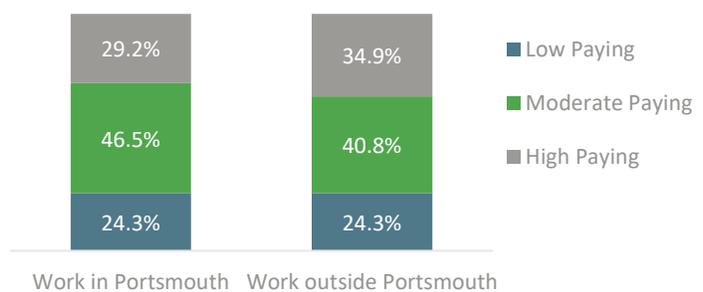
Percentage of Houhseholds with Fewer Vehicles than Workers



Portion of Jobs Filled by City Residents in Portsmouth vs. Norfolk



Level of Pay for Portsmouth Workers by Job Location



⁵⁵ U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics. Inflow/Outflow Report. Low-paying is defined as less than \$1,250 per month, moderate as \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month, and high as greater than \$3,333 per month.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Emsi, 2018.2. This refers to the jobs located in Portsmouth rather than jobs worked by Portsmouth residents.

⁵⁸ Emsi, 2019.2. Each of these jobs pays, at the median, at least \$19.50 an hour.

Recommendations

Examine local labor market data to determine areas of high need and growth. Organizations like Virginia Career Works Hampton Roads provide an annual Labor Market Digest and other research about the labor market in the region.⁵⁹ In addition, Portsmouth may want to invest in a city-specific study to identify industries in which opportunities may exist to develop Portsmouth residents through retraining, adult education programming, apprenticeships, and other workforce development activities. This type of study also may help identify target industries for business development efforts based on the city's current worker skills and abilities.

Increase the number of apprenticeship programs available in Portsmouth companies.

Apprenticeships have been shown to yield positive outcomes for both organizations and individuals. For example, one study found that companies with apprenticeship programs have greater output, reduced errors, reduced turnover, and improved recruitment as a result of their program. Additionally, one cost benefit evaluation using findings from 10 states showed that individuals who participate in an apprenticeship program earn an average of \$5,839 more than similar nonparticipants.⁶⁰

Work with regional transportation partners to help employees get to and from work. More than 22,000 Portsmouth residents work outside the city. Additionally, close to 30,000 individuals live outside of Portsmouth but come to the city to work.⁶¹ While many of these workers own vehicles, some Portsmouth residents living in poverty may not have access to a car and rely on public transit. As Hampton Roads Transit considers changes,⁶² Portsmouth should work with regional partners to ensure workers can get to and from work around the region, including during off-peak hours.

Support neighborhood associations in making Portsmouth an attractive place to live. In addition to regional and citywide efforts, focus should be placed on neighborhoods to improve quality of life. The Denver Foundation found success through supporting grassroots efforts of local residents and neighborhoods.⁶³ Other cities have created neighborhood involvement centers⁶⁴ and hired community liaisons between city leadership and neighborhoods.⁶⁵

Support and incentivize local entrepreneurship for Portsmouth residents. Research has shown new businesses drive job growth and economic dynamism.⁶⁶ Long-term economic growth and

⁵⁹ Retrieved from: <http://www.vcwhamptonroads.org/labor-market-information/>

⁶⁰ Mathematica. (2012). An Effectiveness Assessment and Cost-Benefit Analysis of Registered Apprenticeship in 10 States. Retrieved from: https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP_2012_10.pdf

⁶¹ U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics. Inflow/Outflow Report.

⁶² Retrieved from <https://transformtransit.com/>

⁶³ Retrieved <https://www.cof.org/blogs/re-philanthropy/2014-04-10/community-foundation%E2%80%99s-grassroots-approach-revitalizing>

⁶⁴ Portland, Oregon. For more information, visit <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/civic/28399>

⁶⁵ Indianapolis. For more information, visit <https://www.indy.gov/activity/mayors-neighborhood-advocates>.

⁶⁶ Kauffman Foundation. (2015). The Importance of Young Firms for Economic Growth. Retrieved from <https://www.kauffman.org/what-we-do/resources/entrepreneurship-policy-digest/the-importance-of-young-firms-for-economic-growth>.

prosperity require the participation of entrepreneurs.⁶⁷ Portsmouth may look to identifying strategies and implementing a plan to promote local entrepreneurship.⁶⁸ Possible programs could include offering business coaching,⁶⁹ holding a small business week,⁷⁰ or competitions for seed money.⁷¹

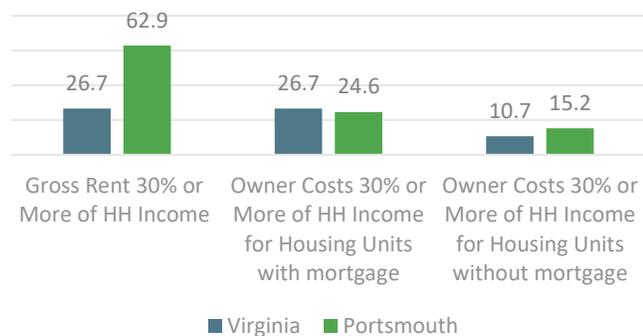
Social Services

Addressing poverty requires not just improving job opportunities for adults and alleviating the effects of poverty for children, but also that individuals and families in poverty have the support they need to fulfill their basic needs in times of crisis and opportunities to live sustainably on a low income. Basic needs such as housing, food, and physical safety are essential to all individuals, but are often not available or sustainable for those living in poverty.

In 2017, the annual one-night “Point-In-Time” count of individuals experiencing homelessness revealed that there are 151 people in homelessness within the City of Portsmouth. Of these people, 55 of them are unsheltered, meaning that they are sleeping in an outdoor location such as an alley, a park, a car, or a tent.⁷² Of the 151 people experiencing homelessness in the city, four of them were young adults (between 18 and 24), 11 of them were veterans, and 12 of them were considered chronically homeless.

Households are considered to be facing housing cost burden if their payments to own or rent their homes are greater than 30% of their household income. In Portsmouth, more than half of all renters (62.9%) pay more than a third of their household income in rent each month. This rate is significantly higher than the Virginia rate of 26.7%.⁷³

Housing Cost Burden



For low-income individuals residing in Portsmouth, there are 39 apartment complexes that contain 4,213 affordable apartments for rent. This number includes 1,795 income-based apartments, 663 Section 8 subsidized apartments, and 2,316 other apartments that do not have rental assistance but are still considered to be affordable housing for low income

⁶⁷ Ribeiro-Soriano, D. (2017). Small business and entrepreneurship: their role in economic and social development. Retrieved from <https://rsa.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/08985626.2016.1255438#>.

⁶⁸ Kauffman Foundation. (2015). The Dos and Don'ts of Local Entrepreneurship Promotion. Retrieved from <https://www.kauffman.org/what-we-do/resources/entrepreneurship-policy-digest/the-dos-and-donts-of-local-entrepreneurship-promotion>

⁶⁹ Indy Chamber. Retrieved from: <https://indychamber.com/entrepreneurship/lending/>

⁷⁰ NaperLaunch. Retrieved from: <https://www.naperlaunch.org/small-business-week>

⁷¹ Sandy Area Chamber of Commerce. Retrieved from: <https://sandychamber.com/sandy-chamber-awards-young-entrepreneurs-seed-money/>

⁷² HUD Exchange. (2007-2017). PIT Counts by CoC.

⁷³ U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

families.⁷⁴ Just over 3,000 families and an additional 3,572 individuals not in families live in poverty in Portsmouth.⁷⁵ When compared to affordable housing availability, an additional 2,359 affordable housing units would need to be available to house all Portsmouth individuals and families in poverty.

An additional consideration for the affordability of housing units is the location and size of the available units. While some units need to house only one adult, others may need to house families with multiple members. Additionally, the location of the housing as it relates to transportation options, food access, and access to the family members' place of employment has vast implications for the overall affordability and accessibility of the housing.

Recommendations

Apply for additional state and federal funding for new or expanded social programming. A large portion of funding for safety net supports for individuals living in poverty comes to cities/counties from state and federal governments and to agencies directly from local United Ways. As Portsmouth moves forward in addressing poverty, it will be important that the city is receiving and effectively utilizing the largest dollar amounts possible from federal and state funding sources like the Community Development Block Grant, Social Services Block Grant, Community Mental Health Services Block Grant, and others. Additionally, other sources of federal and state grant funding can be leveraged and blended together to support poverty alleviation services. It may be valuable to work with leaders in state agencies to bring state funded pilot programs and local place-based initiatives into Portsmouth.

Improve the availability of affordable housing. The qualitative research for this report showed that there are long, and often closed, waitlists for public housing support, and quantitative research showed that there are not enough units available to house all individuals and families living in poverty. Portsmouth may benefit from looking into rapid rehousing models, which have been shown to cost less than emergency shelters, permanent subsidies or transitional housing, and also have been shown to increase family self-sufficiency.⁷⁶ It is important to note that a large-scale shift in approach to housing the city's residents can be addressed through policy, but will require a significant amount of investment and agency collaboration and coordination.

Support a system of collaborative administration of social services. As described in the quantitative research portions of this report, poverty is a multi-faceted issue that cannot be overcome by a single agency or program. Social support systems must work together to provide a unique combination of supports to each family based on their situation and needs. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services provides a toolkit for groups of organizations looking to coordinate care.⁷⁷ There are many models of collaboration (i.e.,

⁷⁴ Affordable Housing Online. Retrieved from: <https://affordablehousingonline.com/housing-search/Virginia/Portsmouth>

⁷⁵ U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey Tables B17021 and B17010

⁷⁶ United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (2017). The Evidence Behind Approaches that Drive an End to Homelessness.

⁷⁷ For more information visit:

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/management/reform/soc/communicate/initiative/ntaec/soctoolkits/coordinationofservices/#phase=pre-planning>

communities in schools, comprehensive systems initiatives, collective impact) that provide guidelines around facilitating collaborative administration of social services. Portsmouth may benefit from using one of these models to guide conversations about referral systems, intake procedures, screenings provided, and other topics that would help agencies coordinate services for families and individuals.

Increase resident access to home ownership support services. With 40.1% of its housing built before 1960,⁷⁸ Portsmouth has a large proportion of older housing that may be difficult for low-income individuals to maintain in good repair. Programs that assist homeowners, such as home weatherization programs, home rehabilitation grants, energy saving programs, or modifying homes for individuals with physical restrictions, may help low-income Portsmouth residents stay in their homes, thus decreasing the burden of subsidized housing on the city. Many of these programs can be funded through the Community Development Block Grant, and often are administered by organizations such as a local Community Action Agency.⁷⁹

Crime/Policing

As found in the public input section of this report, public safety is an important concern amongst Portsmouth residents. Among residents’ and business owners’ top concerns were loitering, panhandling, violent crime, and theft. While data is not collected regarding panhandling and number of people hanging out for long periods of time in highly populated areas, arrest data can tell part of the story about loitering as well as around other more serious crimes.

Crime statistics in the FBI’s Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) are reported in three categories:

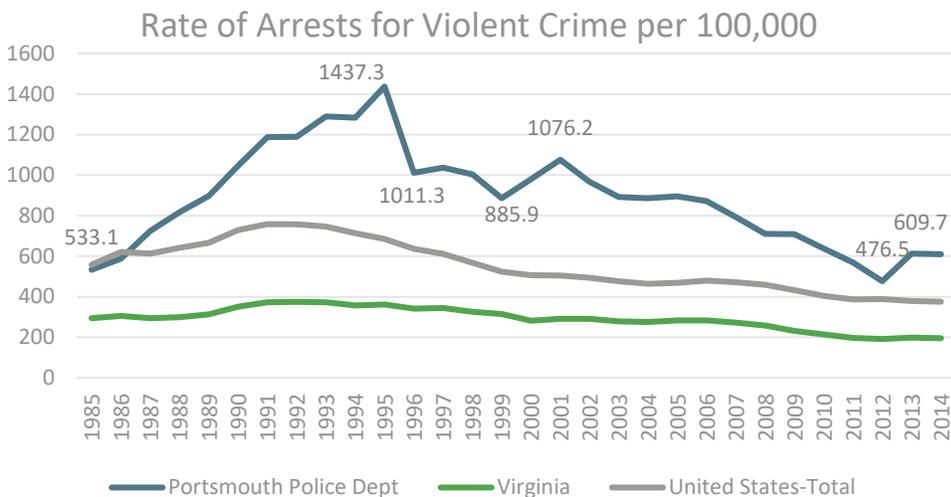
1. Violent Crime – murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault;
2. Property Crime – burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, arson; and
3. Other Crime – anything that does not fit into violent or property crime categories

2014 Violent Crime Arrest Rate per 100,000	
Virginia (statewide)	196.2
Virginia Beach Police Dept	147.9
Hampton Police Dept	255.5
Suffolk Police Dept	272.1
Newport News Police Dept	428.8
Chesapeake Police Dept	429.7
Norfolk Police Dept	520.1
Portsmouth Police Dept	609.7

⁷⁸ Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 2017 1-year estimates, Table DP04

⁷⁹ Hampton Roads Community Action Program serves the City of Portsmouth mostly through Head Start Programming rather than housing supports.

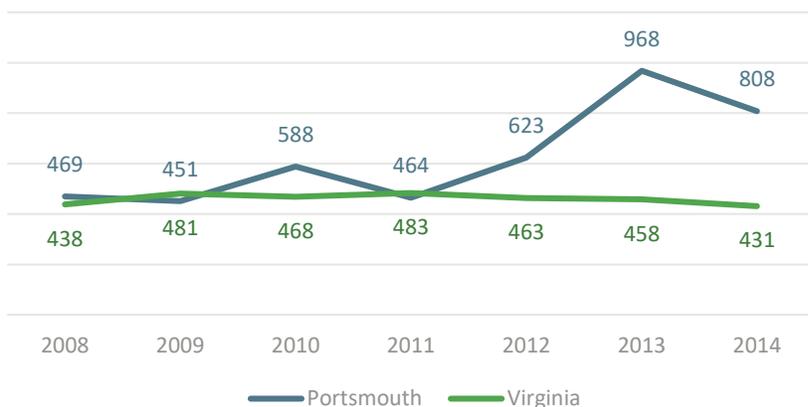
In 2014, the latest UCR data available, Portsmouth saw 609.7 incidents of violent crime per 100,000 residents, the highest rate in the Hampton Roads region.⁸⁰ Another Source, the FBI Crime Data Explorer, has information available on arrests for violent crime rates by agency for more recent years. According to this source, the violent crime rate in Portsmouth has



increased to 702.9 per 100,000 residents in 2015 and 796.3 in 2016.⁸¹ Even so, the violent crime rate in Portsmouth has been decreasing, along with US trends since the early 1990s.⁸²

Conversely, arrests for property crimes ticked up in Portsmouth in 2013 and 2014. This was particularly driven by an increase in larceny-theft of 330 per 100,000 in 2011 compared to a rate of 694 in 2014.

Property Crime Arrest Rate per 100,000



⁸⁰ Including Chesapeake, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach. Retrieved from: <https://www.ucrdatatool.gov/>

⁸¹ <https://crime-data-explorer.fr.cloud.gov/explorer/agency/VA1200000/violent-crime?page=crime&placeId=VA&since=2006&until=2016>

⁸² <https://www.ucrdatatool.gov>

Arrests for other crimes that do not fall into the violent or property crimes categories are similar in Portsmouth to what is happening in Virginia as a whole. A notable exception is that Portsmouth has a significantly higher rate of arrest for curfew/loitering than in VA.

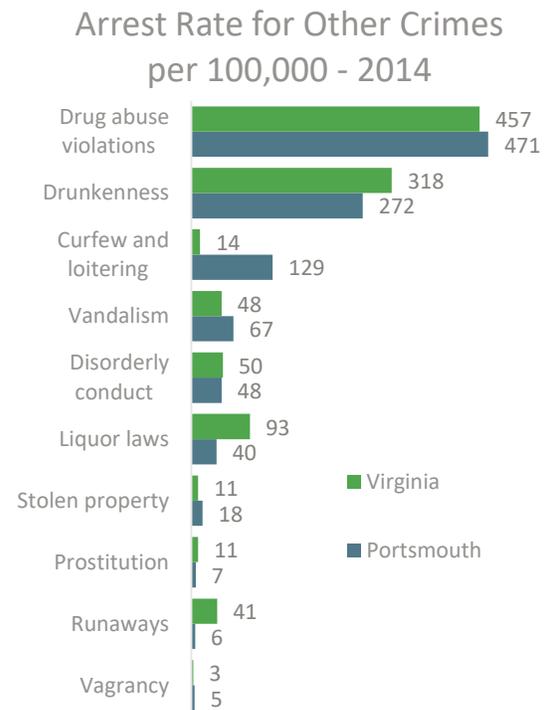
Conversations with the Portsmouth Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) revealed that police sometimes struggle to find appropriate consequences for individuals who are loitering or who exhibit disorderly conduct. Especially for individuals with no home and/or extremely low income, arrests and fines do not provide a suitable deterrent for their actions (i.e., there is little-to-no lasting consequence to unpaid fines except for possible arrest and short-term detainment).

Recommendations

Consider daytime programming to engage adults between feeding and shelter program service times.

Conversations with police officers and City staff members revealed that the placement of the city’s social services just a few blocks away from the major thoroughfare of High Street may be exacerbating individual and business owner perceptions of the loitering and homelessness problems in Portsmouth. It may be beneficial for social service providers to consider offering daytime programming, or a day drop-in center for individuals to use between mealtimes and when shelters are not open. This type of center could include linkages to supports like resume help, provide a place for individuals to take showers or use the internet/computers, case management meeting rooms, or other resources that may be beneficial to current agency’s outreach efforts. The Urban Institute also released a publication reviewing design-based deterrents to loitering and public disorder.⁸³

Implement alternatives to detention for non-violent offenses. To address the issue of policing loitering and providing meaningful deterrents to low-level non-violent crimes, Portsmouth may consider implementing new programming that could serve as an alternative to arrest and/or detention. Some examples of such programs include intensive supervision programs, treatment programs, community service, restorative justice or other community-based alternatives.⁸⁴ Portsmouth also may consider Clean Slate⁸⁵ or Day Works⁸⁶ programs to assist individuals in



⁸³ For more information, visit: <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/31271/1001195-preventing-public-disorder.pdf>

⁸⁴ For more information, visit: <https://ric-zai-inc.com/Publications/cops-p165-pub.pdf>

⁸⁵ For an example from California, visit: <https://cleanslatedfw.org/about/>

⁸⁶ For an example from Denver, visit: <https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/denver-hired-homeless-people-perform-day-labor-city-100-landed-regular-jobs/>

reentering the workforce. The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness also recommends a variety of alternatives to the justice system, such as law enforcement collaboration with behavioral health and social services, that may be beneficial for Portsmouth.⁸⁷

Continue and/or expand positive neighborhood engagement by police. Strong relationships and mutual trust between police agencies and the communities they serve are critical to public safety and effective policing.⁸⁸ Part of building relationships and trust is collaborating and being visible in the community through programs like youth police academies, participation in community events, and involvement in school activities. In its 2019-2024 Strategic Plan, the Portsmouth Police Department outlined an objective to reinforce community engagement by encouraging all employees to participate, deploying satisfaction surveys, and enhancing awareness of their engagement programs. The Taskforce may consider ways to support expansion of the department's engagement activities and programs.

Deter panhandling at key locations by providing alternative donation options. Some business and residents are concerned about aggressive panhandling in Olde Towne Portsmouth. To address the issue, Portsmouth may consider ways to deter panhandling. The court systems have ruled panhandling bans unconstitutional.⁸⁹ Other cities have tried other campaigns including offering individuals a job for a day⁹⁰ or installing donation collection boxes or meters.⁹¹ While the money collected through collection boxes goes to support programs to serve the homeless population, they may not fully discourage panhandling.⁹²

Apply for additional state and federal funding for crime prevention programming. The U.S. Department of Justice⁹³ provides a variety of funding opportunities, especially through their office of Community Oriented Policing Strategies, that may be a good fit for addressing some of the issues in Portsmouth outlined in this report (i.e., neighborhood support and community-based crime reduction).⁹⁴ They also provide funding for school-based safety interventions and for programs that assist with reentry, which may help individuals with records gain access to services and employment opportunities.

⁸⁷ For more information, visit:

https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Searching_Out_Solutions_2012.pdf

⁸⁸ (2015). U.S. Department of Justice. Retrieved from <https://www.justice.gov/crs/file/836486/download>.

⁸⁹ Governing. (2017). Retrieved from: <https://www.governing.com/topics/health-human-services/gov-panhandling-homeless-supreme-court-reed-gilbert.html>

⁹⁰ For more information, visit: <https://www.hopeworksnm.org/programs-and-services/theres-a-better-way/>

⁹¹ For more information, visit: <https://www.apnews.com/48aaccef76fd47c383d8189b715c2361>

⁹² For more information, visit: <http://www.spokesman.com/stories/2019/apr/11/city-raises-almost-20000-from-anti-panhandling-pro/>

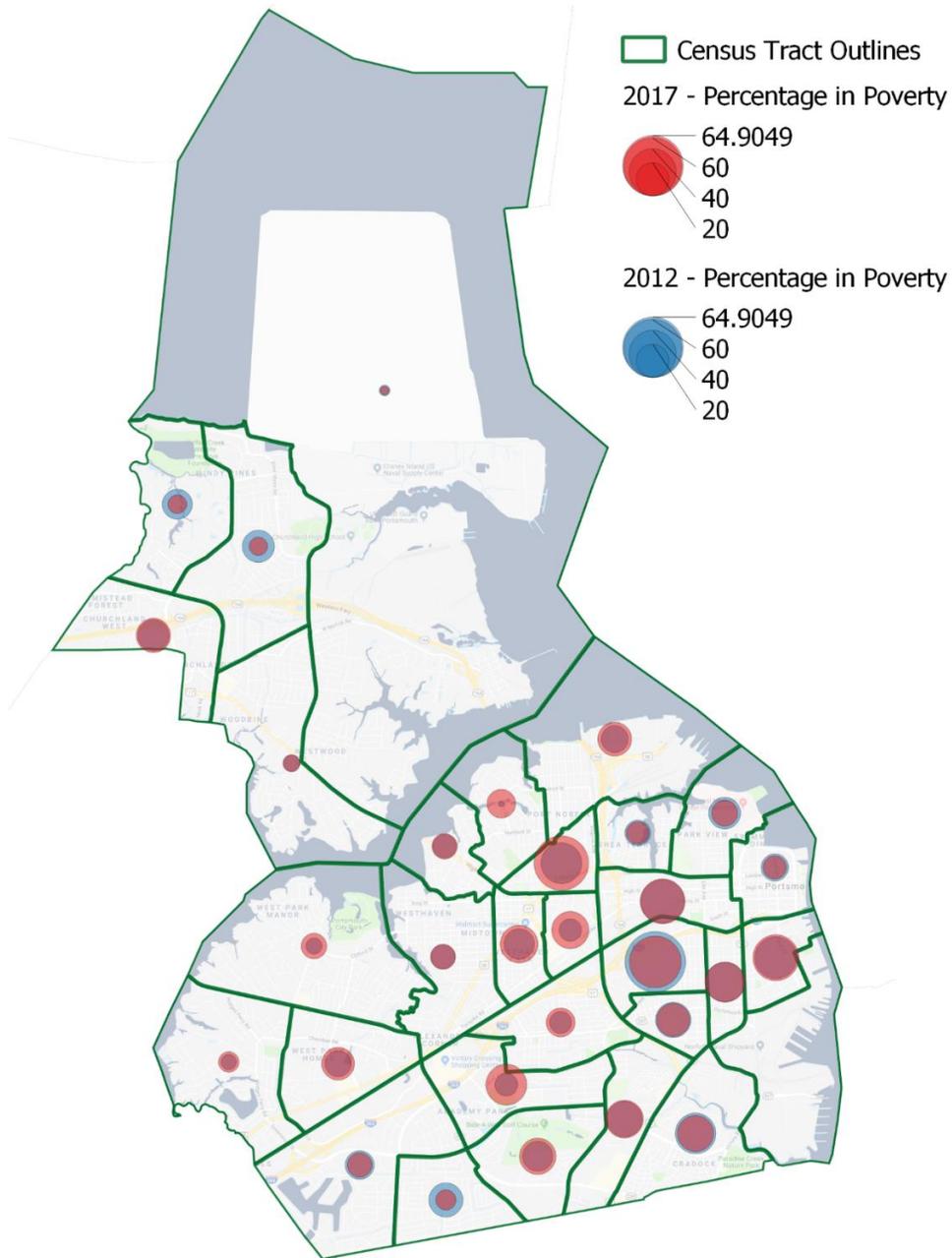
⁹³ For more information, visit: <https://ojp.gov/funding/>

⁹⁴ For more information, visit: <https://cops.usdoj.gov/grants>

CENSUS TRACT PRIORITIZATION IN PORTSMOUTH

Across the city, poverty is most concentrated in the areas just outside of Olde Towne/Downtown Portsmouth. However, it has increased in most parts of the city over the past five years. Figure 1 visualizes poverty in each census tract in both 2012 and 2017; here, circles outlined in blue signal tracts where poverty has decreased, outlines in red signal increases, and the rest (shaded in purple) have remained the same.

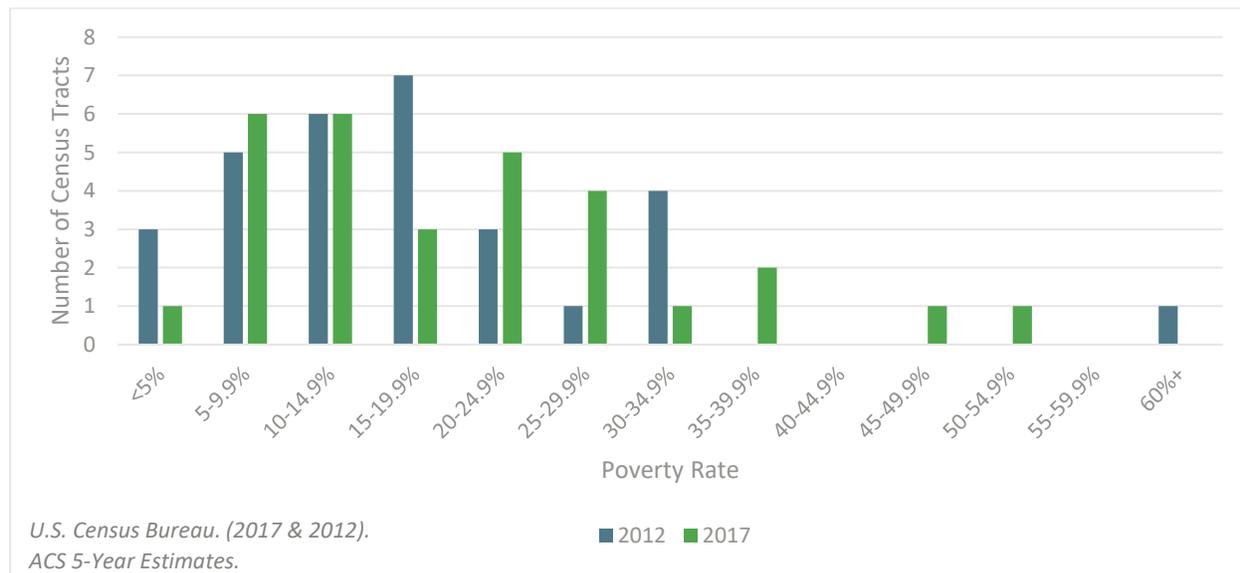
Figure 1: Change in Poverty Levels by Census Tract, 2012-2017⁹⁵



⁹⁵ Data from U.S. Census Bureau: 2017 & 2012 ACS 5-Year Estimates, & TIGER/LINE Shapefiles.

These broader trends of poverty increase across the city are further exemplified by Figure 2. Poverty rates increased in 63.3% of Portsmouth Census Tracts, and in some areas the rates in 2017 were much higher than they were five years prior. In fact, while 30.0% of tracts had poverty rates above 20% in 2012, this portion rose to 46.7% in 2017.

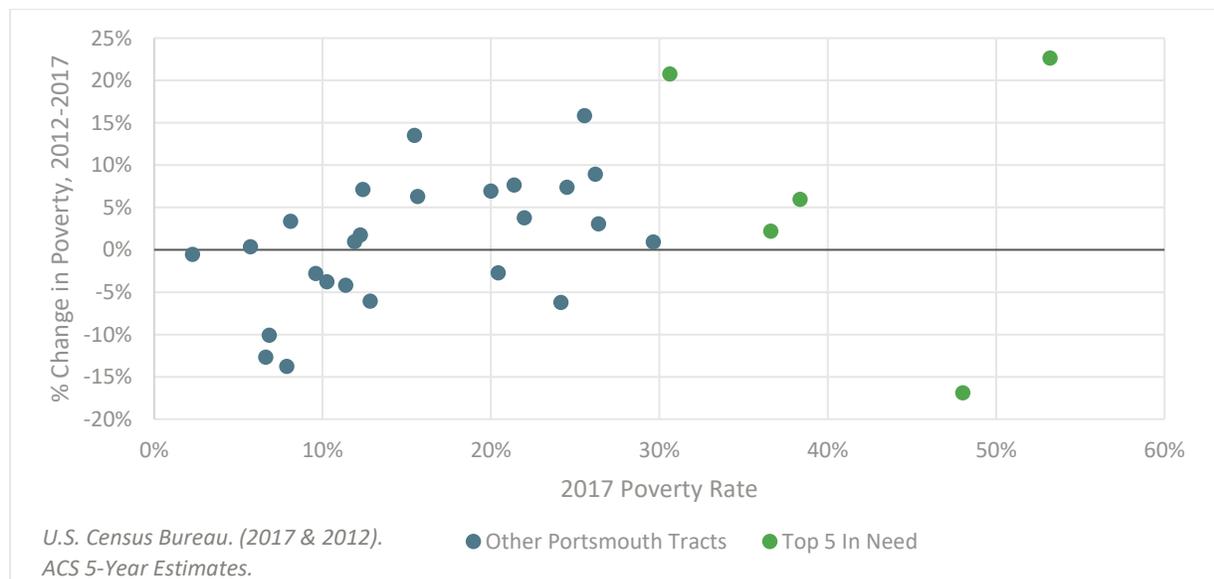
Figure 2: Number of Tracts at Each Level of Poverty, 2012 vs. 2017



Top 5 Priority Tracts in Portsmouth

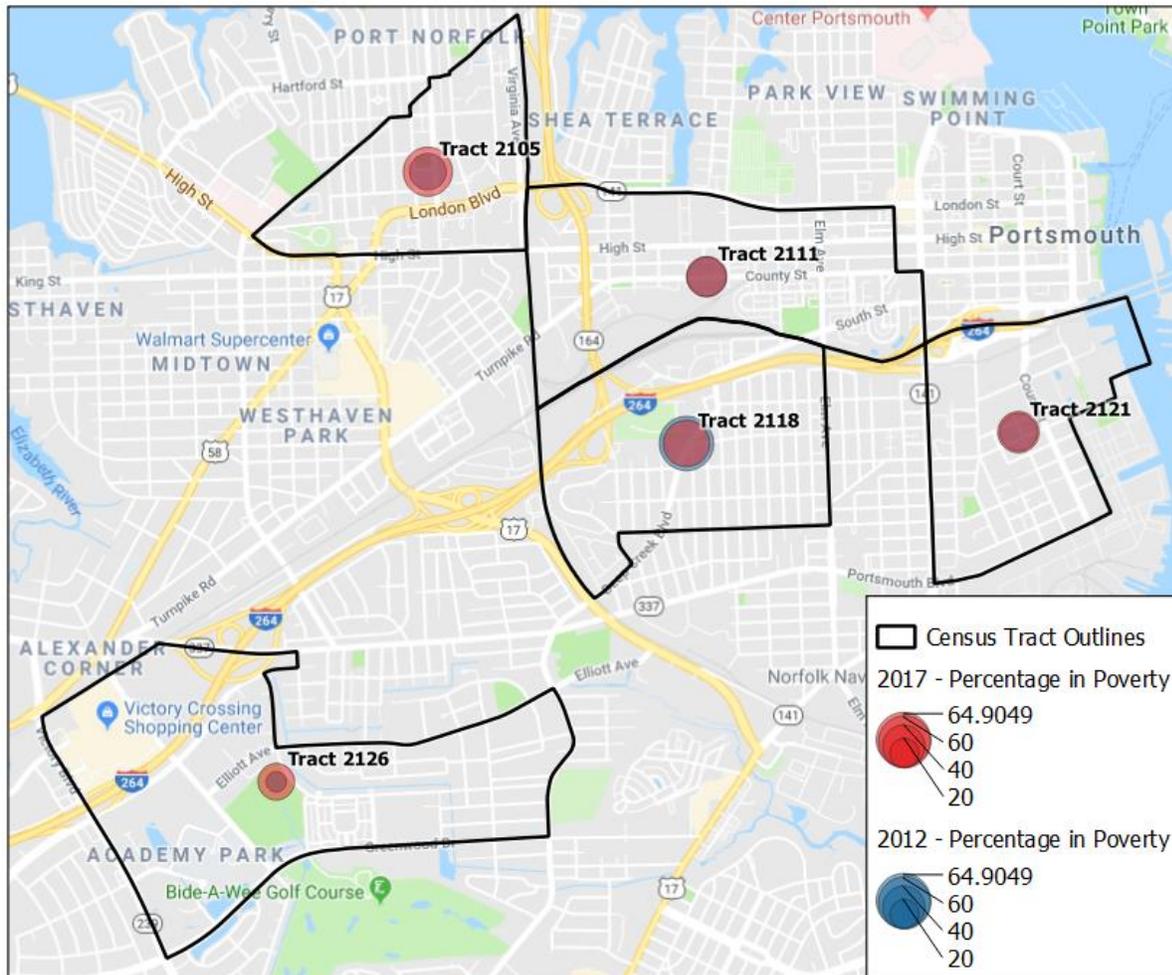
These changes in poverty, as well as overall rates of poverty, drove the identification of five priority tracts. These tracts are shown in Figure 3. All five had poverty rates in 2017 of above 30.0%, and four of the five saw increases in poverty over the last five years.

Figure 3: Change in Poverty and 2017 Poverty Rates: Top 5 in Need vs. Other Portsmouth Tracts



These five tracts are displayed on the map in Figure 4. They are mostly clustered in central Portsmouth, but also include the area around Woodland Park on the southwest side of the city.

Figure 4: Map of Top 5 Tracts in Need



These tracts are different than the rest of the city in a variety of ways. They have significantly higher poverty rates, as shown in Figure 5. However, they also have significantly higher proportions of young children (Figure 6), have lower levels of educational attainment (Figure 7), and have less equitable income distributions than the rest of the city or the U.S. (Figure 8). Lastly, they are less populated, but growing faster than other Portsmouth tracts (Figure 9).

Figure 5: Poverty Rate: Top 5 in Need and Other Portsmouth Tracts

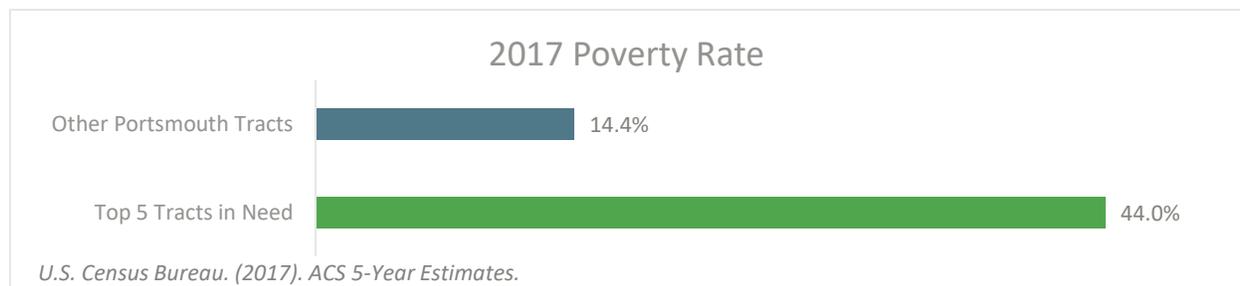


Figure 6: Population Under 12 Years: Top 5 in Need and Other Portsmouth Tracts

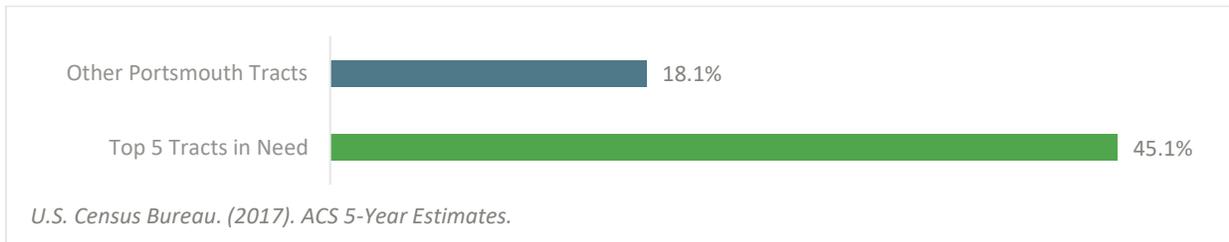


Figure 7: Attainment of Bachelor's Degree or Higher for Top 5 in Need and Other Portsmouth Tracts

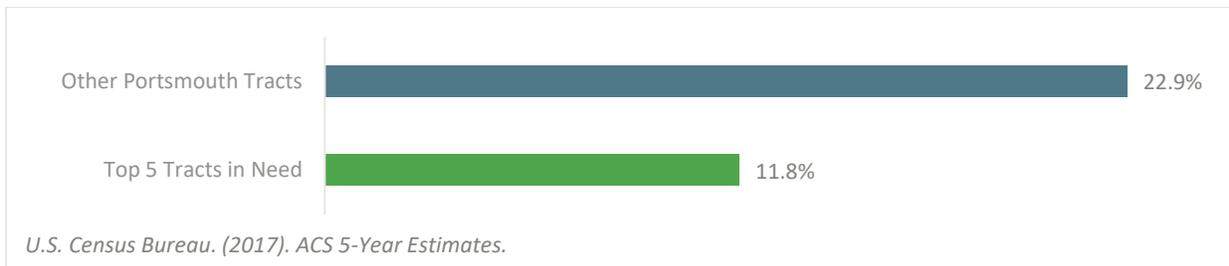


Figure 8: Income Distribution: Top 5 in Need and Other Portsmouth Tracts

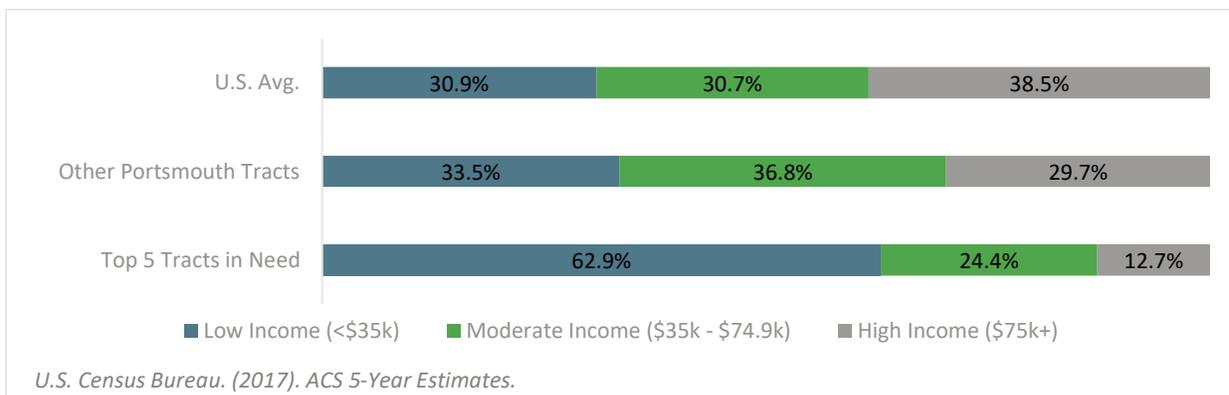
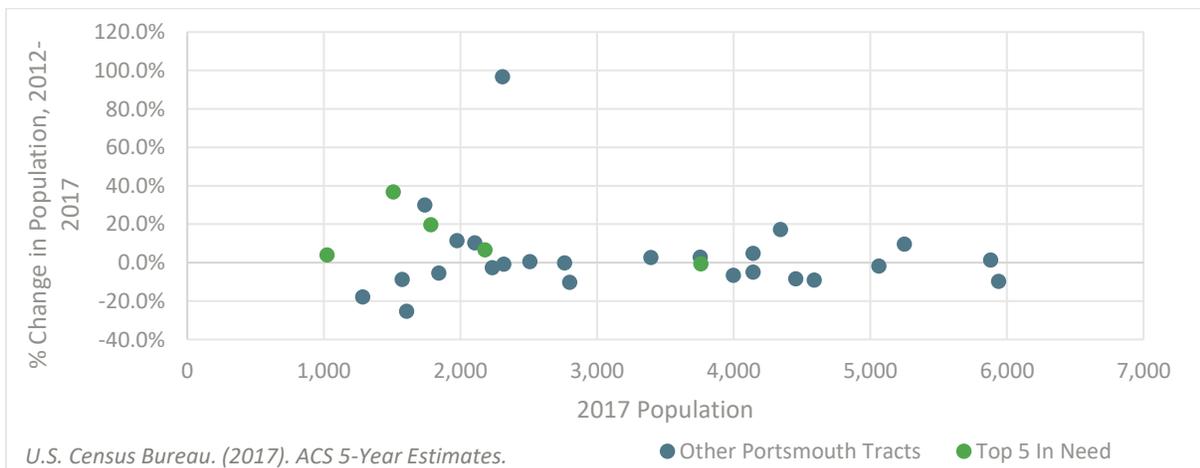


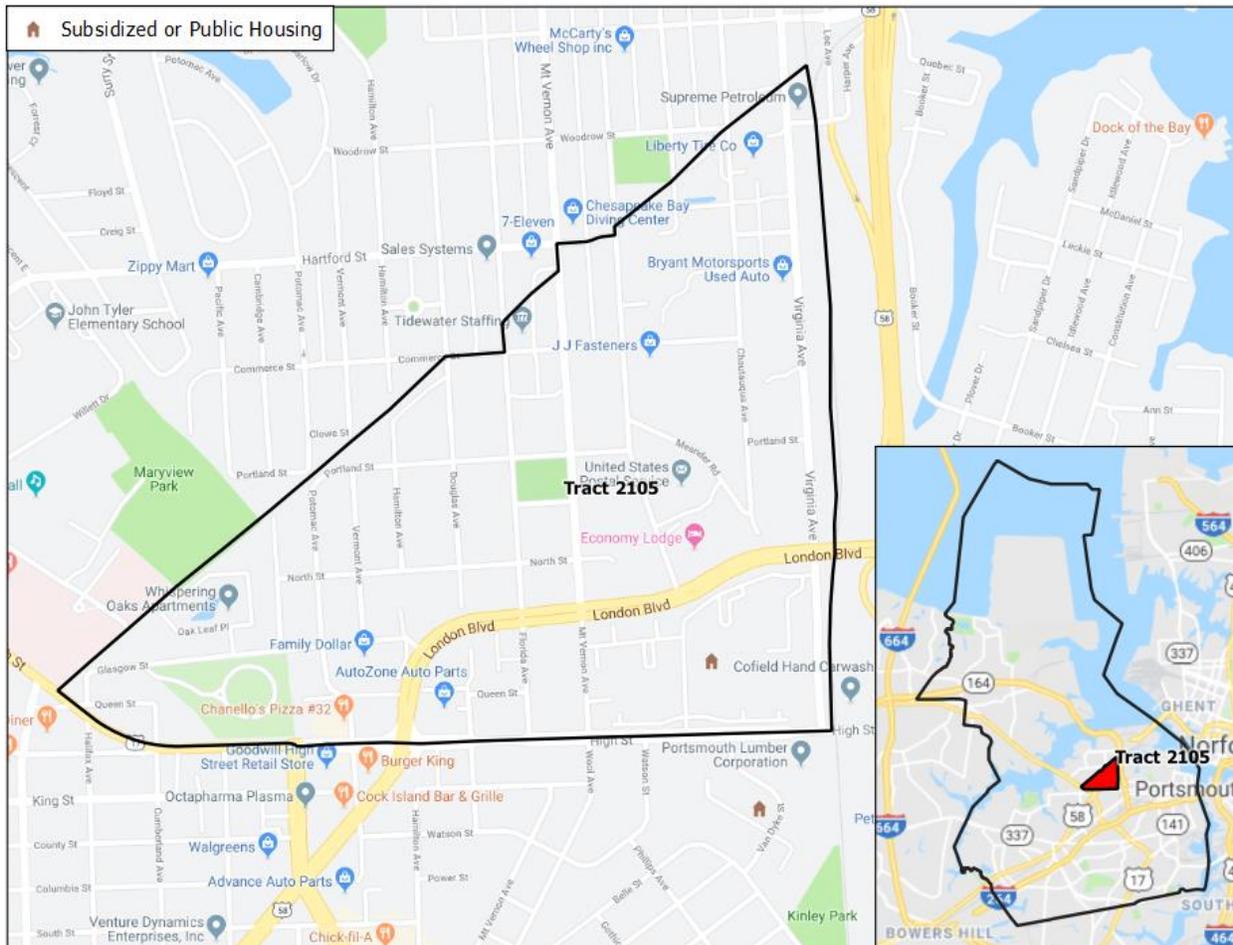
Figure 9: Change in Population & 2017 Population Among Portsmouth Census Tracts



Tract 2105

Tract 2105 has the highest poverty rate of any in Portsmouth, at 53.2%. It is located to the west of Olde Towne Portsmouth—as shown in Figure 10. The tract is home to a couple of small parks, a post office, and London Oaks subsidized apartments, but no major institutions.

Figure 10: Tract 2105 Tract Map



This tract’s poverty rate has increased by 22.6% since 2012, growing much faster than the top 5 tracts overall. Its population has also increased by 6.7%, ranking third among the top 5 poverty tracts.

Table 1: Tract 2105 Poverty & Population

	Tract 2105	Avg. of Top 5	Avg. of Other Tracts
2017 Poverty Rate	53.2%	44.0%	14.4%
2012-2017 Change in Poverty Rate	22.6%	1.9%	0.1%
2017 Population	2,044	2,435	3,955
2012-2017 Population Growth	6.7%	9.0%	-0.1%

U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). ACS 5-Year Estimates.

Like other high-poverty tracts, 2105 has a high proportion of young children and a low level of educational attainment. Its housing is more modern than the average Portsmouth tract and it has a relatively low vacancy rate, signifying that housing conditions may not be the primary concern for the tract. However, homeownership in the tract is very low: just 12.2% of all housing units are owner-occupied.⁹⁶

Table 2: Tract 2105 Demographics & Housing

	Tract 2105	Avg. of Top 5	Avg. of Other Tracts
% of Population Under 12	48.7%	45.1%	18.1%
% of Population Over 65	2.4%	4.8%	12.0%
Ed. Attainment: % Bachelor's or Higher	10.9%	11.8%	22.9%
Housing: Median Year Built	1980	1970	1965
Housing Vacancy Rate	4.6%	10.8%	10.4%

U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). ACS 5-Year Estimates.

In addition, income diversity is a significant concern for Tract 2105. Just 4.9% of the tract’s households earn more than \$75k per year—less than half that of even its high-poverty Portsmouth peers. In addition, fewer than 25% of Tract 2105 households are moderate income, meaning that the vast majority of Tract 2105 residents are in the low-income category.

Table 3: Tract 2105 Income

	Tract 2105	Avg. of Top 5	Avg. of Other Tracts
Median Household Income	\$20,072	\$28,018	\$52,312
Low Income (<\$35k)	72.8%	62.9%	33.5%
Moderate Income (\$35k - \$74.9k)	22.3%	24.4%	36.8%
High Income (\$75k+)	4.9%	12.7%	29.7%

U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). ACS 5-Year Estimates.

Tract 2105 Recommendations

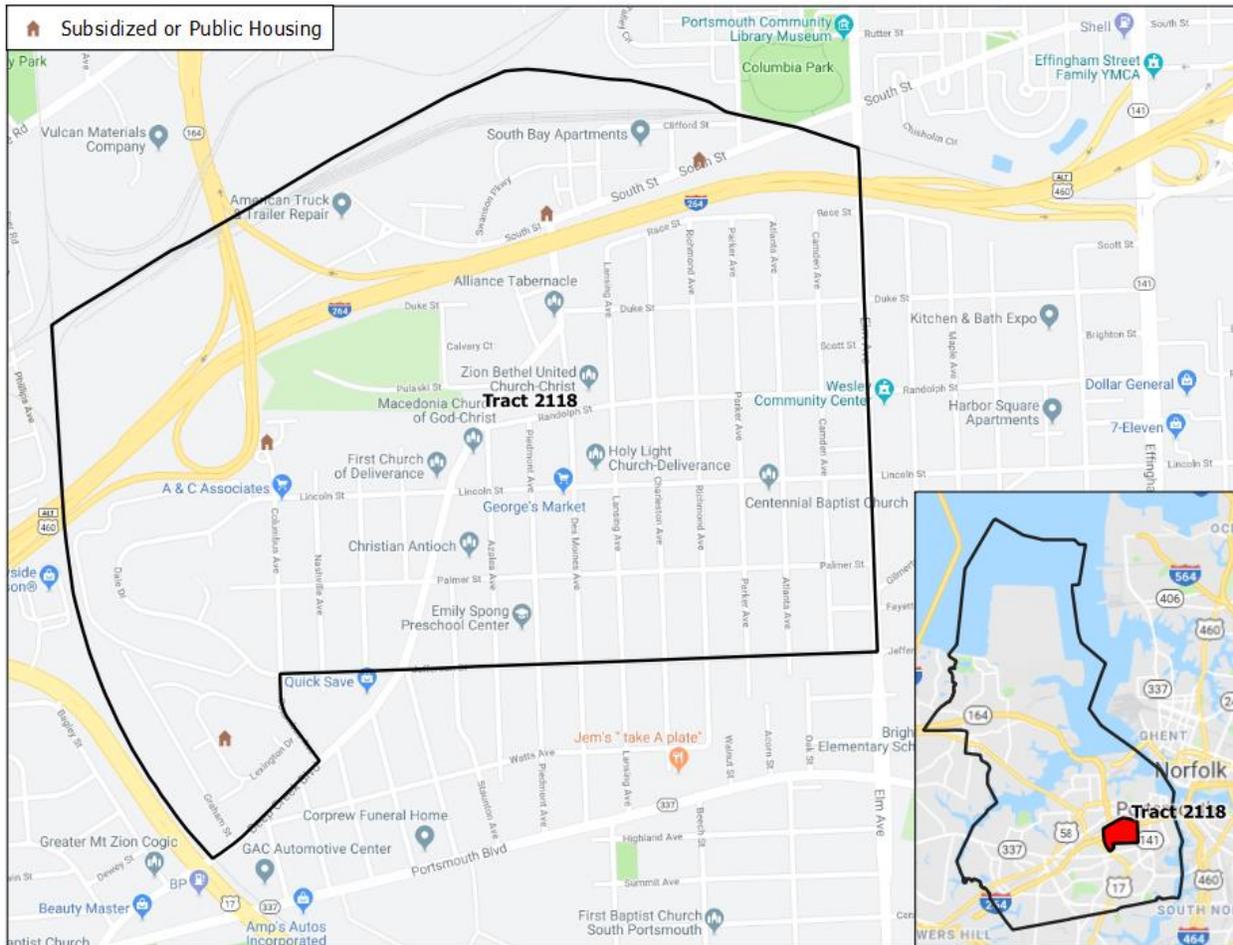
The City of Portsmouth should work to increase income diversity in the Tract 2105 tract. Given the relatively new housing stock and low vacancy rate, this tract is not a strong candidate for housing rehabilitation. Instead, Portsmouth should focus on programs that can increase homeownership and housing supply, as well as programs that increase income opportunities for current residents in Tract 2105. These might include adult education and workforce training programs, entrepreneurship opportunities, financial literacy classes, and concentrated economic development efforts. There may be opportunities to partner with the Mt. Hermon Civic League, Mt. Hermon Baptist Temple, and Mt. Hermon Pre-School Center to implement some of these efforts and, more generally, improve civic engagement in the Tract 2105 tract.

⁹⁶ U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). ACS 5-Year Estimates.

Tract 2118

Tract 2118 is just southwest of Olde Towne Portsmouth. It has the second highest poverty rate in Portsmouth, at 48.0%. It is home to two Civic Leagues/Tract Associations and is primarily a residential area. It also includes four different public housing properties.

Figure 11: Tract 2118 Tract Map



Poverty in Tract 2118 has declined significantly since 2012, but is still quite high. At the same time, the population of the tract has decreased slightly.

Table 4: Tract 2118 Poverty & Population

	Tract 2118	Avg. of Top 5	Avg. of Other Tracts
2017 Poverty Rate	48.0%	44.0%	14.4%
2012-2017 Change in Poverty Rate	-16.9%	1.9%	0.1%
2017 Population	3,784	2,435	3,955
2012-2017 Population Growth	-0.7%	9.0%	-0.1%

U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). ACS 5-Year Estimates.

Like other high-poverty tracts, Tract 2118 has a large population of children, very few seniors, and low educational attainment. The tract’s housing stock is older, on average, than the rest of Portsmouth, and it has a relatively high vacancy rate of 12.3%.

Table 5: Tract 2118 Demographics & Housing

	Tract 2118	Avg. of Top 5	Avg. of Other Tracts
% of Population Under 12	51.1%	45.1%	18.1%
% of Population Over 65	1.7%	4.8%	12.0%
Ed. Attainment: % Bachelor's or Higher	11.0%	11.8%	22.9%
Housing: Median Year Built	1951	1970	1965
Housing Vacancy Rate	12.3%	10.8%	10.4%

U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). ACS 5-Year Estimates.

In terms of income diversity, Tract 2118 is approximately on-par with the rest of the five high-poverty census tracts. However, its median household income is lower (\$24.3k), and less than half the Portsmouth tract average. In addition, the area is also a food desert, causing further challenges for local residents.⁹⁷

Table 6: Tract 2118 Income

	Tract 2118	Avg. of Top 5	Avg. of Other Tracts
Median Household Income	\$24,318	\$28,018	\$52,312
Low Income (<\$35k)	64.2%	62.9%	33.5%
Moderate Income (\$35k - \$74.9k)	22.6%	24.4%	36.8%
High Income (\$75k+)	13.1%	12.7%	29.7%

U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). ACS 5-Year Estimates.

Tract 2118 Recommendations

Tract 2118 has high poverty levels but is trending in the right direction. According to Galster et. al., the age of Tract 2118’s housing stock may be contributing to these trends: “Older housing, traditionally associated with tract decline, predicts falling poverty.”⁹⁸ This housing age, coupled with a high vacancy rate, indicates need for community development programs in Tract 2118: housing rehabilitation, home repair assistance, and housing development. In addition, as with Tract 2105, the City of Portsmouth should work to increase income diversity and increase food access in Tract 2118, particularly for families with young children. The Brighton/Prentis Park Civic League, Swanson Homes Tenant Council, and the Wesley Community Center may be good partners in these efforts.

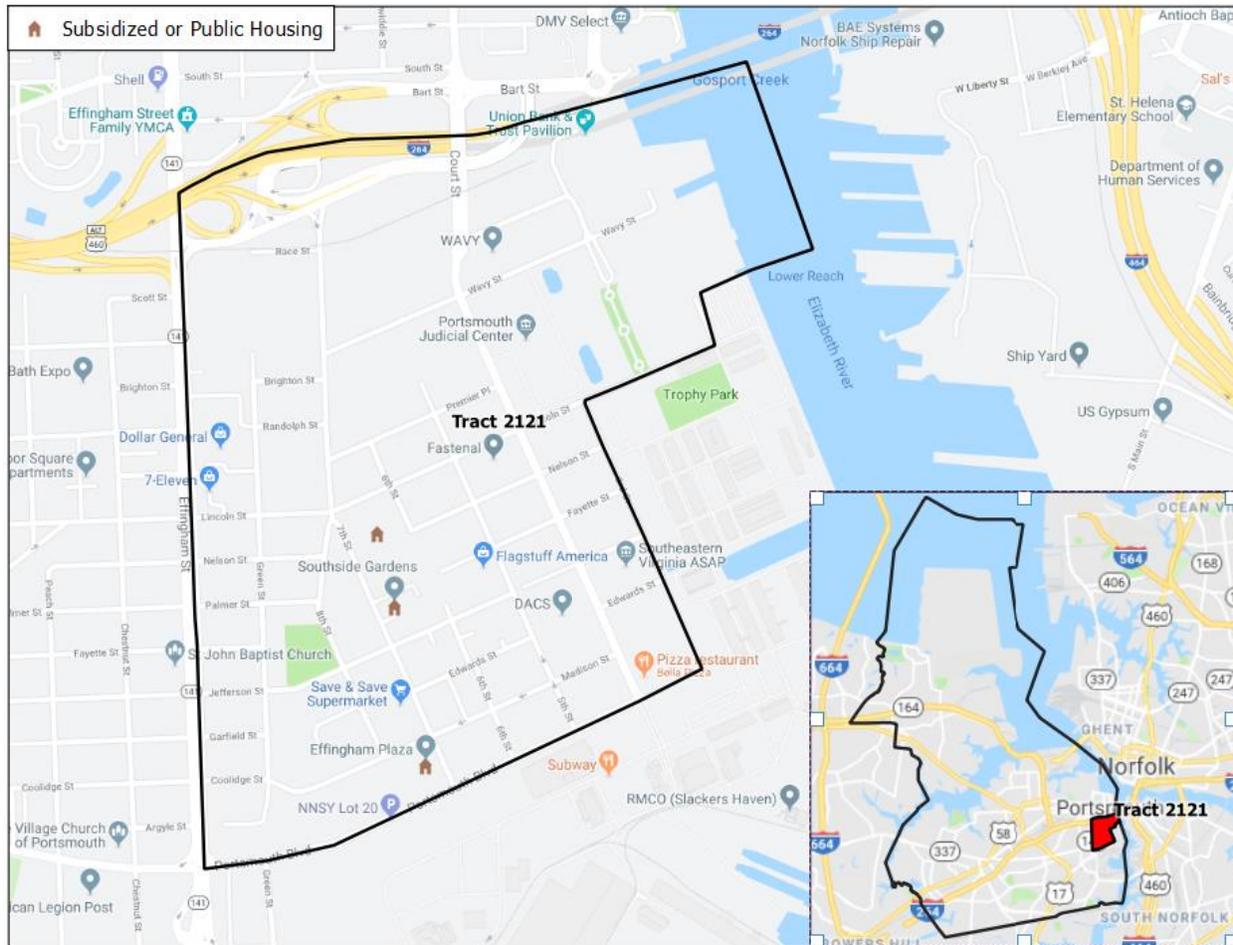
⁹⁷ USDA ERS. (2017). Food Access Atlas. Definition: 100+ households do not have vehicle access and are more than half a mile from a grocery store.

⁹⁸ Galster, G. C., Quercia, R. G., Cortes, A., & Malega, R. (2003). The Fortunes of Poor Neighborhoods. *Urban Affairs Review*. 39(2), 205–227.

Tract 2121

Tract 2121 is bound by 264 on the north, 141 on the west, and Portsmouth Blvd. on the South. It has the third-highest poverty rate of any Portsmouth tract, at 38.4%. It is home to the Portsmouth Judicial Center, Jefferson Park, and a mix of both residential and business properties. It is home to three different subsidized housing properties.

Figure 12: Tract 2121 Tract Map



While the population of Tract 2121 is lower than the average census tract, the tract has seen substantial population growth since 2012—ranking highest among the top 5 tracts in need. Its poverty rate has also risen slightly.

Table 7: Tract 2121 Poverty & Population

	Tract 2121	Avg. of Top 5	Avg. of Other Tracts
2017 Poverty Rate	38.4%	44.0%	14.4%
2012-2017 Change in Poverty Rate	6.0%	1.9%	0.1%
2017 Population	1,102	2,435	3,955
2012-2017 Population Growth	36.8%	9.0%	-0.1%

U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). ACS 5-Year Estimates.

The tract has a somewhat more evenly-distributed population than the rest of the five high-poverty areas, but still has more young children and fewer seniors than the Portsmouth average. It also has much lower levels of educational attainment, slightly newer housing, and slightly lower vacancy rates than other parts of the city. Lastly, homeownership in the tract is quite low, at just 17.5%.⁹⁹

Table 8: Tract 2121 Demographics & Housing

	Tract 2121	Avg. of Top 5	Avg. of Other Tracts
% of Population Under 12	23.2%	45.1%	18.1%
% of Population Over 65	7.1%	4.8%	12.0%
Ed. Attainment: % Bachelor's or Higher	7.7%	11.8%	22.9%
Housing: Median Year Built	1978	1970	1965
Housing Vacancy Rate	8.0%	10.8%	10.4%

U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). ACS 5-Year Estimates.

Tract 2121's income distribution is roughly on par with that of the other high-poverty tracts. It has many more moderate-income households, but far fewer high-income households.

Table 9: Tract 2121 Income

	Tract 2121	Avg. of Top 5	Avg. of Other Tracts
Median Household Income	\$25,607	\$28,018	\$52,312
Low Income (<\$35k)	60.9%	62.9%	33.5%
Moderate Income (\$35k - \$74.9k)	32.5%	24.4%	36.8%
High Income (\$75k+)	6.6%	12.7%	29.7%

U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). ACS 5-Year Estimates.

Tract 2121 Recommendations

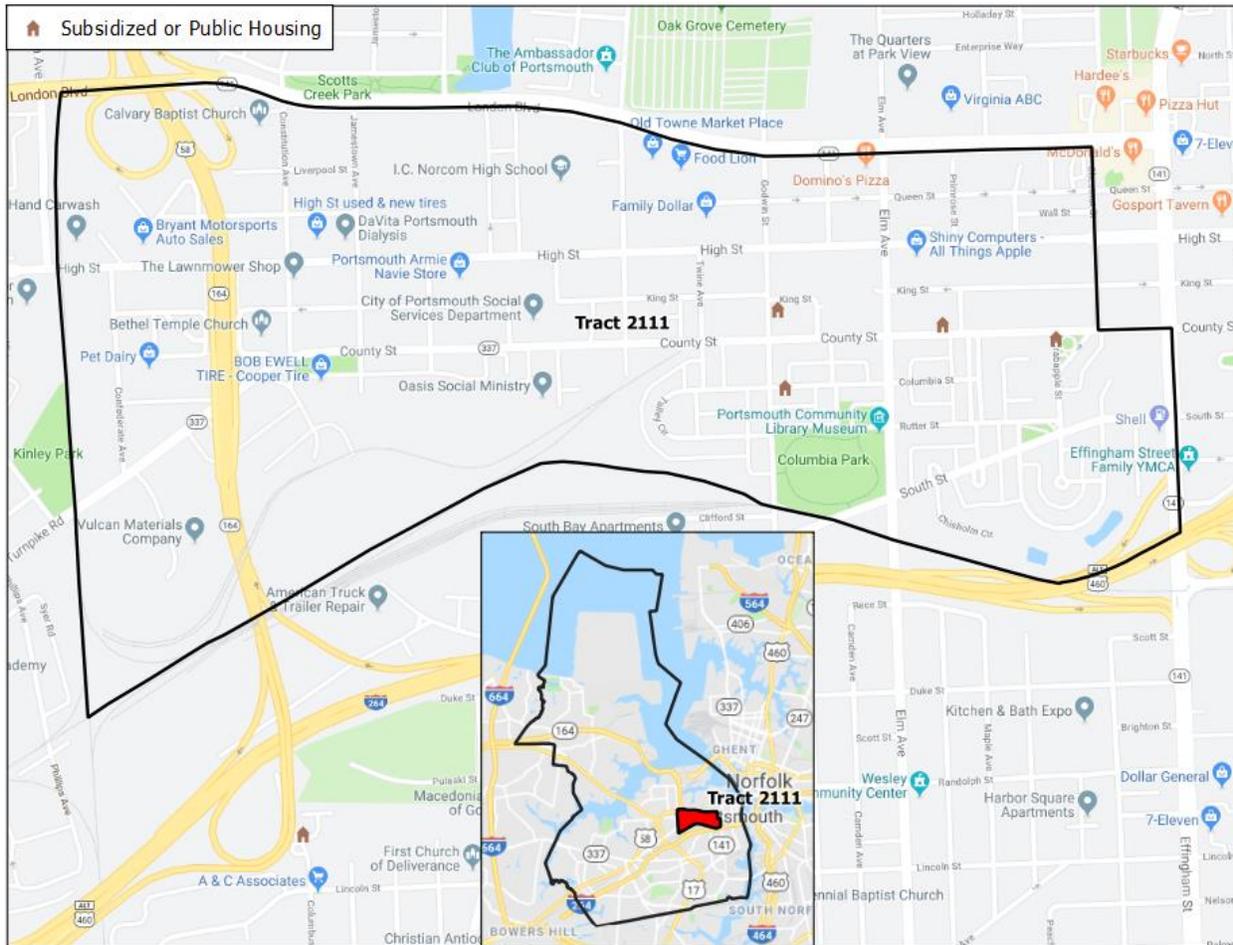
Though statistical trends in Tract 2121 do not appear to be indicative of gentrification, the recent surge in population in Tract 2121 may have caused disruptions or changes for long-time residents. This is a challenge to be aware of as the City strives to improve conditions for residents in this tract. A couple of key areas of policy need for the tract include providing opportunities for increased income and increasing the educational attainment levels of the tract's residents. With close proximity to Tidewater Community College, and the strong presence of businesses in the Tract 2121, there may be opportunities to partner with local employers to provide additional workforce training and educational options for Tract 2121 residents.

⁹⁹ U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). ACS 5-Year Estimates.

Tract 2111

Tract 2111 is located just west of Olde Towne Portsmouth, and is home to a variety of city institutions, such as the Social Services Department, the Portsmouth Colored Community Library Museum, I.C. Norcom High School, and a variety of civic organizations. The tract also has four different subsidized housing properties.

Figure 13: Tract 2111 Tract Map



This tract has also seen strong population growth since 2012, at 19.7%. During the same time, its poverty rate has increased slightly, by 2.2%.

Table 10: Tract 2111 Poverty & Population

	Tract 2111	Avg. of Top 5	Avg. of Other Tracts
2017 Poverty Rate	36.6%	44.0%	14.4%
2012-2017 Change in Poverty Rate	2.2%	1.9%	0.1%
2017 Population	1,490	2,435	3,955
2012-2017 Population Growth	19.7%	9.0%	-0.1%

U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). ACS 5-Year Estimates.

Tract 2111 has much more age and educational diversity than other high-poverty tracts. It also has a significant amount of recently-built housing, with a half of its housing built since 2003. This is associated with a relatively low vacancy rate of 6.5%, indicating that there could be demand for housing construction in this area.

Table 11: Tract 2111 Demographics & Housing

	Tract 2111	Avg. of Top 5	Avg. of Other Tracts
% of Population Under 12	34.9%	45.1%	18.1%
% of Population Over 65	15.2%	4.8%	12.0%
Ed. Attainment: % Bachelor's or Higher	16.9%	11.8%	22.9%
Housing: Median Year Built	2003	1970	1965
Housing Vacancy Rate	6.5%	10.8%	10.4%

U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). ACS 5-Year Estimates.

Lastly, from an income perspective, Tract 2111 has slightly more diversity than other high-poverty areas, but is still a predominantly low-income area.

Table 12: Tract 2111 Income

	Tract 2111	Avg. of Top 5	Avg. of Other Tracts
Median Household Income	\$25,093	\$28,018	\$52,312
Low Income (<\$35k)	61.1%	62.9%	33.5%
Moderate Income (\$35k - \$74.9k)	22.4%	24.4%	36.8%
High Income (\$75k+)	16.6%	12.7%	29.7%

U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). ACS 5-Year Estimates.

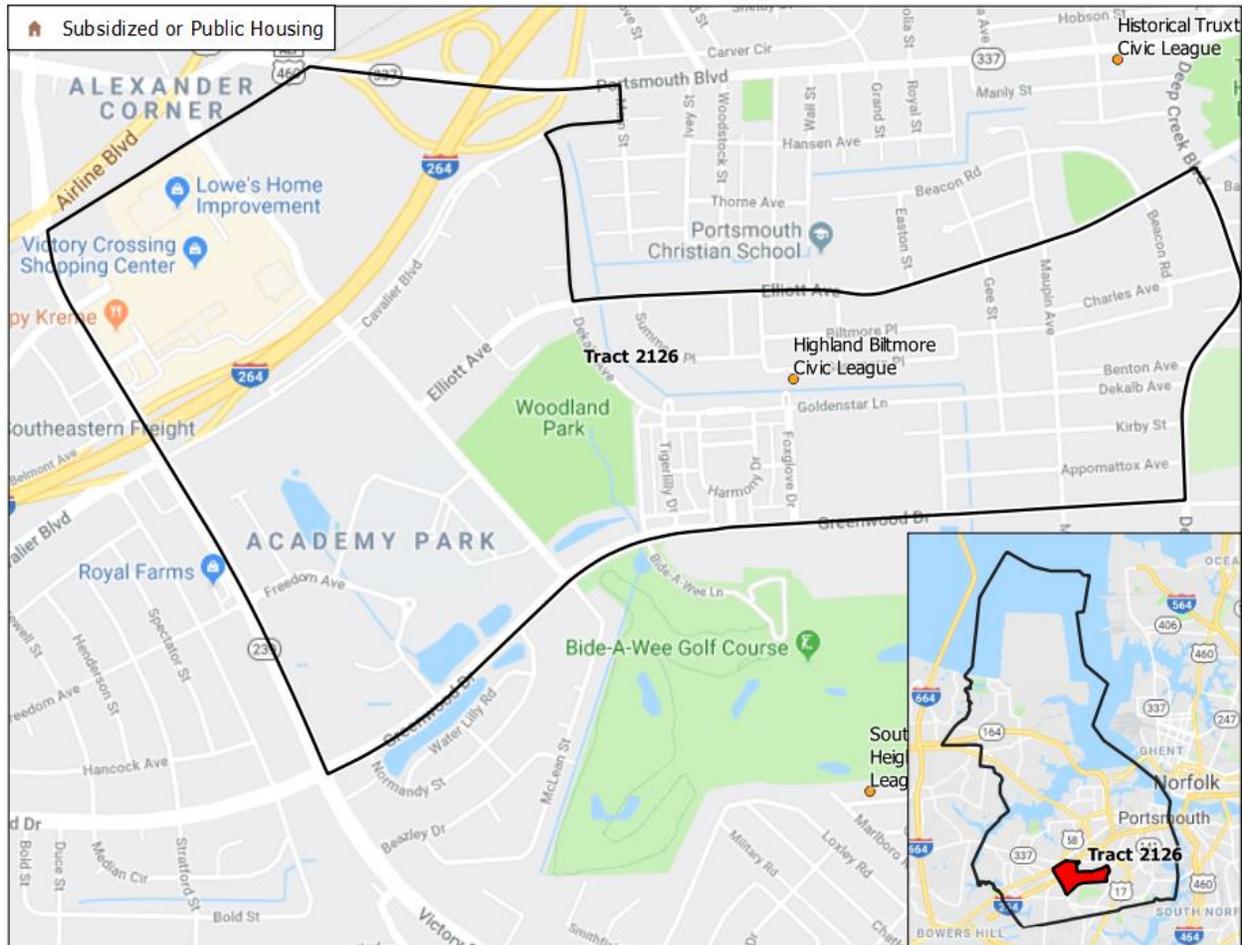
Tract 2111 Recommendations

With the large presence of civic institutions in this tract and the recent surge in population and housing, it appears as though this tract may be primed for significant positive change. Unfortunately, the population changes that have occurred over the past five years have not been associated with decreases in poverty. There are likely significant opportunities for collaborative partnerships between the City and the tract's local institutions to change the course of its development moving forward. Some key policy opportunities might include increasing the integration of the high school into the rest of the community through social services partnerships and increased career training, strategic infrastructure and economic development efforts to draw external investment into the community, and concentrated efforts to leverage the museum, park, and recreation center assets that are already present in the tract.

Tract 2126

The fifth-highest poverty tract in Portsmouth is Tract 2126. It is located on the southwest side of Portsmouth, and includes the Victory Crossing Shopping Center, Tidewater Community College, Woodland Park, and Victory Elementary School.

Figure 14: Tract 2126 Tract Map



This is not historically a high-poverty tract; it grew from a 9.8% poverty rate in 2012 to 30.6% in 2017. At the same time, it experienced modest population growth of 4.0%.

Table 13: Tract 2126 Poverty & Population

	Tract 2126	Avg. of Top 5	Avg. of Other Tracts
2017 Poverty Rate	30.6%	44.0%	14.4%
2012-2017 Change in Poverty Rate	20.8%	1.9%	0.1%
2017 Population	983	2,435	3,955
2012-2017 Population Growth	4.0%	9.0%	-0.1%

U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). ACS 5-Year Estimates.

Tract 2126 has a very high concentration of families with young children, and very few residents over the age of 65. It also has aging housing stock, and a very high vacancy rate. This tract has much higher rates of homeownership than other high-poverty census tracts, with 55.0% of housing units being owner-occupied.¹⁰⁰

Table 14: Tract 2126 Demographics & Housing

	Tract 2126	Avg. of Top 5	Avg. of Other Tracts
% of Population Under 12	65.8%	45.1%	18.1%
% of Population Over 65	0.0%	4.8%	12.0%
Ed. Attainment: % Bachelor's or Higher	12.7%	11.8%	22.9%
Housing: Median Year Built	1954	1970	1965
Housing Vacancy Rate	25.6%	10.8%	10.4%

U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). ACS 5-Year Estimates.

These statistics paint the picture of a tract that was once high income, but is transitioning into poverty. The median household income in Tract 2126 is still close to the Portsmouth average, and 30.2% of families are high-income. The concern is that as the housing stock continues to age, population will decrease and poverty will continue to increase.

Table 15: Tract 2126 Income

	Tract 2126	Avg. of Top 5	Avg. of Other Tracts
Median Household Income	\$45,000	\$28,018	\$52,312
Low Income (<\$35k)	43.3%	62.9%	33.5%
Moderate Income (\$35k - \$74.9k)	26.6%	24.4%	36.8%
High Income (\$75k+)	30.2%	12.7%	29.7%

U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). ACS 5-Year Estimates.

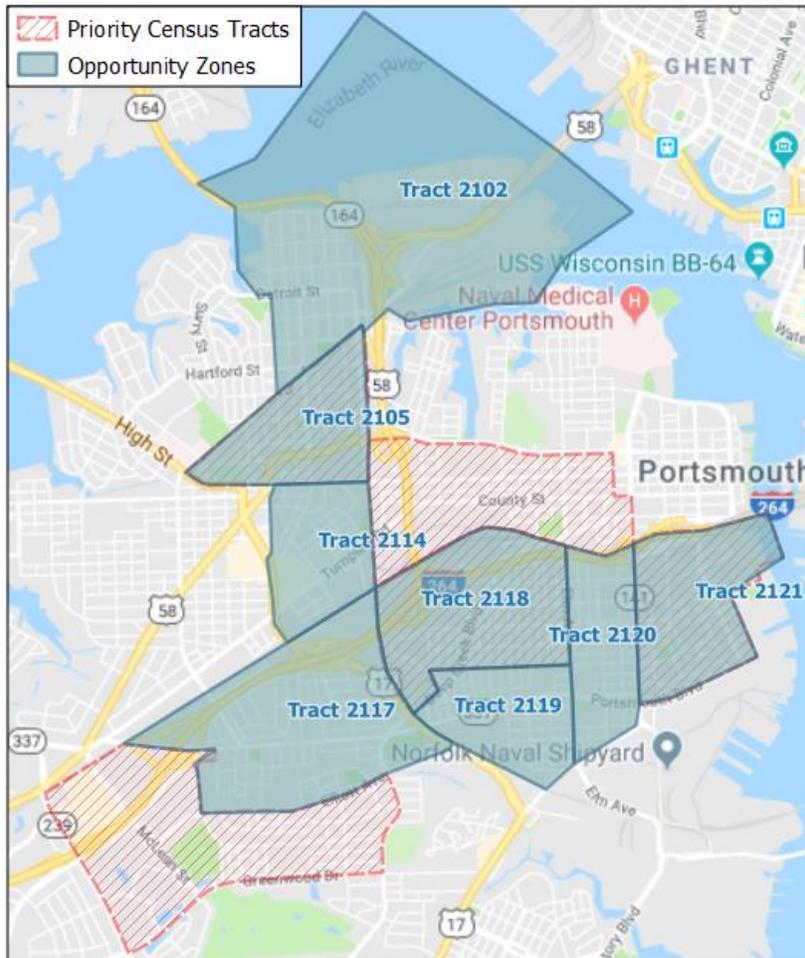
Tract 2126 Recommendations

The circumstances in Tract 2126 are very different from those in the rest of the high-poverty census tracts. The census tract itself is not very cohesive—cut in half by 264 and Tract 2126. Thus, any investment in Tract 2126 is likely to occur in conjunction with investments or improvements in adjacent areas. However, the tract is also full of strong civic resources, including the community college and the Highland Biltmore Civic League. These partners may be able to provide good feedback on the source of recent trends and provide suggestions for improvements. However, given the tract’s housing characteristics and high rate of homeownership, investment in home repair and weatherization programs, targeted rehabilitation of vacant properties, and tract infrastructure investments would likely help stem the tide of increasing poverty.

¹⁰⁰ U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). ACS 5-Year Estimates.

Opportunity Zone Census Tracts

Figure 15: Opportunity Zones & Priority Tracts in Portsmouth



In addition to the prioritized census tracts profiled above, Portsmouth has eight different census tracts that have been designated as Opportunity Zones (OZs). This federal designation—enacted as part of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017—provides capital gains tax benefits for funders who invest in property within an OZ. Across the country, a large pool of investors is looking for ways to take advantage of this incentive. This offers opportunity for significant injection of external capital into struggling areas, but with more than 8,000 OZs across the U.S., competition for attracting investment will be high. In addition, strategy is important in order to ensure that investment creates community benefit.

Portsmouth’s designated zones are shown in Figure 15. As the figure shows, three of the eight OZs are also priority tracts, but the remaining five are not. Thus, a separate set of actions are necessary to fully take advantage of the OZ program. This should involve four steps, some of which may require the assistance of external experts or consultants:

1. Gain understanding of the Opportunity Zone incentive mechanics
2. Identify suitable properties and projects that can be marketed to opportunity zone investors. Key criteria include the following:
 - a. Alignment with local economic development priorities
 - b. Ease of activation, including presence of willing property owners
 - c. Potential for positive community impact
3. Compile a prospectus that makes the case for investing in Portsmouth, and highlights the identified project options
4. Use the prospectus for marketing Portsmouth’s OZs, including local outreach and connections, to national Opportunity Funds

APPENDIX A: PUBLIC INPUT METHODOLOGY

Thomas P. Miller and Associates (TPMA) used the following methodology to determine areas of emphasis and research for the Portsmouth Poverty Study. First, TPMA team members met with City officials and local service providers to gather information about project expectations and current efforts to alleviate poverty. Over the course of the project, TPMA met with:

- Portsmouth Planning Department
- The Miles Agency
- Portsmouth Volunteers for the Homeless
- Portsmouth City Council members
- Portsmouth Department of Social Services
- Norfolk State University
- Portsmouth Area Resources Coalition, Portsmouth's Continuum of Care organization
- Mayor Rowe
- Oasis
- Portsmouth City Manager and Deputy City Managers
- Portsmouth Redevelopment and Housing Authority
- Old Dominion University
- Portsmouth Police Department Chief and Officers
- Portsmouth Health Department
- Portsmouth Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism
- Hampton Roads Community Health Center
- Opportunity Inc.
- United Way of South Hampton Roads

TPMA along with the Miles Agency gathered public input through a survey and a public input forum. The survey, available in Appendix B, opened June 6, 2018 and was available online through June 25, 2018. Additionally, the survey was made available both on a tablet and in paper format at three public events in Portsmouth throughout June:

- Seawall Music Festival - June 9, 2018
- Ramonta - June 14, 2018
- Soul Intent - June 21, 2018

The survey was reopened in January 2019 to solicit more responses from individuals living poverty.

A live public forum was held June 21, 2018 from 6:00pm – 8:30pm at the Portsmouth Department of Social Services building. The event was coordinated and promoted by the Miles Agency and facilitated by TPMA. The forum included two activities to gather written information from attendees, as well as a moderated discussion about causes and correlates of Poverty in Portsmouth. The PowerPoint slides used for the forum are available in Appendix C. Attendees also were also provided a paper copy of the survey to fill out during the event.

Both the survey and the public forum were marketed widely through a press release and at the events listed above. Information about the survey also was announced via radio. The public input session was held from 6:00 to 8:00pm at the Department of Social Services and was attended by twenty-six members of the general public, seven staff and officials from the City of Portsmouth, and three members of the media. The forum was covered by both local television and local newspaper.

TPMA facilitated a focus group with sixteen members of Church and Community in Action, a convening of faith leaders in Portsmouth seeking to tap into resources to assist community members in need.

TPMA worked with the Planning Department and PHRA to conducted two focus groups at PHRA communities in January 2019. The first was held in the evening at Hope Village and was attended by PHRA staff. The second was held in the morning at Swanson Homes and was attended by four residents. TPMA visited with individuals at Oasis while lunch was being served. As part of the focus groups and one-on-one conversations, participants were asked to place a sticker on the top issues for them and their families. This activity was used to begin conversations about the issues important to participants.

After the survey closed, the public input forum was completed, and focus groups completed, TPMA utilized all information about poverty in Portsmouth gathered using the methods described above to design and create content for this report.

APPENDIX B: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

In early 2017, the Portsmouth City Council decided to launch a poverty initiative that engages Portsmouth elected officials, residents, and service providers in addressing the causes and correlates of poverty in the city. As part of this initiative, the City seeks public input to help guide ongoing research and recommendations.

Thank you for participating in our survey. Your feedback is important.

1. Are you a resident of the City of Portsmouth?

- Yes
 No

2. To what extent should the City of Portsmouth prioritize the following poverty-related issue areas?

	Not A Priority	Low Priority	Somewhat a Priority	High Priority
Access to public parks/playgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clean and well-lit streets and sidewalks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Affordable housing availability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Homelessness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of living-wage jobs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transportation to and from work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workforce training, certification, apprenticeship programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Policing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Violent crime	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-violent crime (graffiti/theft)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Panhandling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public health hazards (lead, air quality)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to mental health care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Substance abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Early childhood care and education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Continue on Next Page →

	Not A Priority	Low Priority	Somewhat a Priority	High Priority
K-12 education quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Out-of-school time programs for children and youth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Skill-based training /certification in K-12 education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Truancy or dropouts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adult education / GED / Language Programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
College enrollment / persistence/ success	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. How long have you lived in Portsmouth?

- Less than a year
- One to five years
- Six to ten years
- More than ten years
- Not a resident

4. Do you currently receive any of the following: TANF, WIC, Free School Lunches, or SNAP?

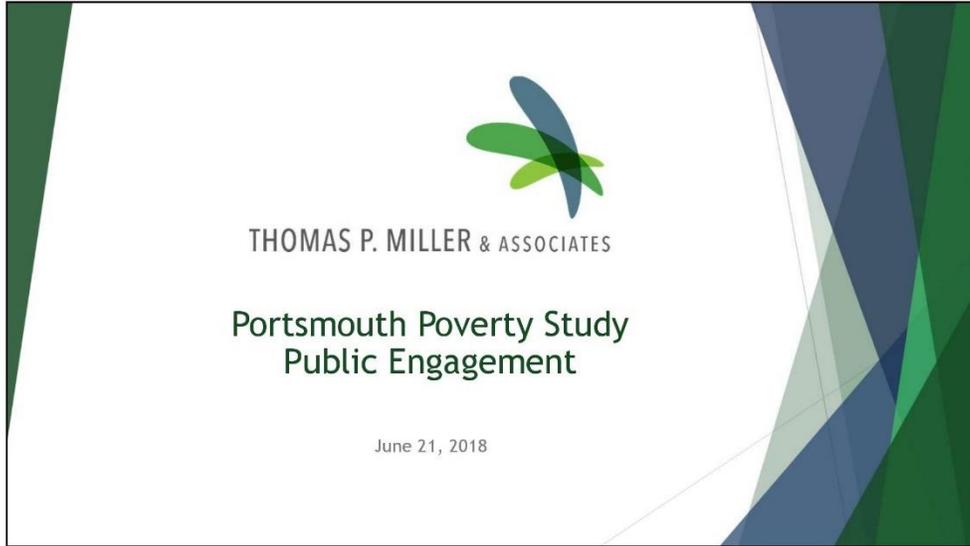
- Yes
- No

5. What services or opportunities for yourself or your family do you wish were available in your community?

6. What do you think the City of Portsmouth should do to address poverty in the city?

THANK YOU!

APPENDIX C: PUBLIC INPUT FORUM POWERPOINT SLIDES



1



2

Introduction

The City of Portsmouth, through the direction of City Council, has launched a poverty initiative to research and address the possible causes of poverty.

As part of this initiative, the City seeks public input to help guide ongoing research and recommendations.

We want to hear about your thoughts and experiences around poverty in Portsmouth and broader Hampton Roads.



3

Focus Areas

- ▶ Employment
- ▶ Education
- ▶ Health
- ▶ Communities
- ▶ Safety
- ▶ Housing



4

Activity: Focus Areas

- ▶ Spread out and visit each of the Focus Areas,
- ▶ Share your ideas or perceptions around the causes of poverty.
- ▶ Try to group your idea near any similar or related ideas.
- ▶ Feel free to discuss with your neighbors,
- ▶ But, use only about 5 minutes at each Focus Area.



5

Prioritization

- ▶ While we want to address all possible causes of poverty, there are limited time and resources.
- ▶ So, we must identify those causes that are the most significant or important causes.
- ▶ If we concentrate our time and resources on those first, we will have a bigger impact.
- ▶ Which of our causes identified today do you think are the most significant?



6

Activity: Prioritization

- ▶ Take one sheet of stickers,
- ▶ Visit each of the Focus Areas,
- ▶ Place one sticker on the priority that you think is most important under that Focus Area.
- ▶ Once you have finished, please return to your seat.
- ▶ Feel free to discuss your choices with others.



7

Facilitated Discussion

- ▶ What were the top three priorities for each focus area?
- ▶ Do we agree with those? Why or why not?
- ▶ Did we miss anything?

8



Next Steps

- ▶ Your feedback will guide the ongoing research.
- ▶ TPMA will develop recommendations based on research.
- ▶ TPMA will present the research findings and recommendations to you at our next visit:
AUGUST 15
Same Location
Same Time

9

Have more questions? Please contact us!

<p>Joseph Finke <i>Project Consultant</i></p> <p>Email: jfinke@tpma-inc.com</p>	<p>Emily Krauser <i>Assistant Director</i></p> <p>Email: ekrauser@tpma-inc.com</p>
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THOMAS P. MILLER & ASSOCIATES

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APPENDIX D: FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

[Integrated Care for Kids \(inCK\)](#)

Department of Health and Human Services

The InCK Model will assist states and local communities in addressing priority health concerns for children, such as behavioral health challenges, including opioid and other substance use, and the effects of opioid use on families.

[Economic Development Assistance Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs](#)

Department of Commerce
Economic Development Administration

Provides investments that support construction, non-construction, technical assistance, and revolving loan fund projects under EDA's Public Works and EAA programs. Grants and cooperative agreements made under these programs are designed to leverage existing regional assets and support the implementation of economic development strategies that advance new ideas and creative approaches to advance economic prosperity in distressed communities. EDA provides strategic investments on a competitive-merit-basis to support economic development, foster job creation, and attract private investment in economically distressed areas of the United States.

[Day of Service Grants](#)

Corporation for National and Community Service

The Day of Service grant competition includes funding for both September 11th Day of Service and Remembrance (September 11th) and Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service (MLK). Applicant organizations may apply for either September 11th, MLK, or both. Applicants may not submit more than one application for each Day of Service.

[AmeriCorps VISTA](#)

Corporation for National and Community Service

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) seeks Concept Papers for the AmeriCorps VISTA program from outcome-driven organizations that share the AmeriCorps VISTA mission of providing long term solutions to poverty.

[AmeriCorps NCCC](#)

Corporation for National and Community Service

Each year, AmeriCorps NCCC engages teams of members in projects in communities across the United States. Service projects, which typically last from six to eight weeks, address critical needs related to natural and other disasters, infrastructure improvement, environmental stewardship and conservation, energy conservation, and urban and rural development. Members mentor students, construct and rehabilitate low-income housing, respond to natural

disasters, clean up streams, help communities develop emergency plans, and address countless other local needs.

CNCS Virginia State Office

Tynetta Darden
Virginia
250 E St SW
Washington, DC 20525
Phone: 202-606-3450
Email: VA@cns.gov

State Service Commission-Virginia

Gail P. Harris
Director
Office of Volunteerism and Community
Service, Virginia Dept.
801 East Main Street
Richmond, VA 23219-2901
Phone: 800-638-3839
Fax: 804-726-7088
Email: gail.harris@dss.virginia.gov
Website: <http://virginiainservice.virginia.gov/>

[Community Services Block Grants – Region 3](#)

Office of Community Services

The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) provides funds to alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty in communities.

[Maternal Child and Health Bureau](#)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

The Maternal and Child Health Bureau offers a variety of grant and cooperative agreement funding, including competitive, expansion, and non-competing continuation opportunities.

[Community Economic Development](#)

Office of Community Services

CED is a federal grant program funding Community Development Corporations (CDCs) that address the economic needs of individuals and families with low income through the creation of sustainable business development and employment opportunities.

[Program for Investment in Micro-Entrepreneurs \(PRIME\)](#)

U.S. Small Business Administration

PRIME provides assistance to various organizations. These organizations help low-income entrepreneurs who lack sufficient training and education to gain access to capital to establish and expand their small businesses.

[Regional Innovation Strategies](#) (deadline passed for 2019)

Department of Commerce

EDA is committed to fostering connected, innovation-centric economic sectors that support the conversion of research into products and services, businesses, and ultimately jobs through

entrepreneurship. Funding is available for capacity-building programs that provide proof-of-concept and commercialization assistance to innovators and entrepreneurs, and for operational support for organizations that provide essential early-stage funding to startups.

[Choice Neighborhoods](#)

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

The Choice Neighborhoods program leverages significant public and private dollars to support locally-driven strategies that address struggling neighborhoods with distressed public and/or HUD-assisted housing through a comprehensive approach to neighborhood transformation. Local leaders, residents, and stakeholders, such as public housing authorities, cities, schools, police, business owners, nonprofits, and private developers, come together to create and implement a plan that revitalizes distressed HUD housing and addresses the challenges in the surrounding neighborhood.

[Administration for Children & Families](#)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF), within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), is responsible for the Federal Programs that promote the economic and social well-being of families, children, individuals, and communities.

[U.S. Department of Education](#)

The Department of Education promotes student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

[The Annie E. Casey Foundation](#)

The primary mission of the foundation is to foster public policies, human service reforms, and community supports that more effectively meet the needs of today's vulnerable children and families. In pursuit of this goal, the foundation makes grants that help states, cities, and communities fashion more innovative, cost-effective responses to these needs.

[The PNC Foundation](#)

The foundation supports programs designed to enhance educational opportunities for children, with emphasis on early childhood education, and to promote the growth of targeted communities through economic development initiatives.

[W.K. Kellogg Foundation](#)

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation supports children, families, and communities as they strengthen and create conditions that propel vulnerable children to achieve success as individuals and as contributors to the larger community and society. The foundation's work is carried out by partners and programs that help it achieve its three organizational goals and embody its commitments to community and civic engagement, and to racial equity. The three goals are: 1) Educated kids: Success by third grade. Increase the number of children who are reading-and-math proficient by third grade; 2) Healthy Kids: Healthy birth weight and optimal development.

Increase the number of children born at a healthy birth weight and who receive the care and healthy food they need for optimal development; and 3) Secure Families: Children and families at 200% above poverty. Increase the number of children and families living at least 200% above the poverty level.

[National League of Cities](#)

Cities can get a free license to access the database of grants on their site.

[Bank of America Charitable Foundation](#)

The Bank of America Charitable Foundation supports programs designed to advance pathways to economic mobility in order to build thriving communities. Special emphasis is directed toward workforce development and education, community development, and basic needs.

[Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#)

The foundation's mission is to improve the health and health care of all Americans. Its efforts focus on fostering environments that promote health and on improving how health care in America is delivered and paid for, and how well it does for patients and their families.

[The Kresge Foundation](#)

The foundation seeks to strengthen nonprofit organizations by catalyzing their growth, connecting them to their stake holders, and challenging greater support through grants. The foundation believes that strong, sustainable, high capacity organizations are positioned to achieve their missions and strengthen communities. Grants are awarded to nonprofit organizations operating in the fields of education, health and long-term care, human services, arts and humanities, public affairs, and science, nature, and the environment.

[Gannett Foundation](#)

The foundation supports organizations involved with arts and culture, media and journalism, education, conservation, health, youth development, human services, diversity, community development, minorities, women, and economically disadvantaged people.

[The Wal-Mart Foundation](#)

The foundation supports programs designed to promote opportunity, sustainability, and community. Special emphasis is directed toward hunger relief and healthy eating; health and human service; quality of life; education; community and economic development; diversity and inclusion; public safety; and environmental sustainability.

[The Liberty Mutual Foundation, Inc.](#)

The foundation supports organizations involved with arts and culture, education, health, human services, community development, and civic affairs. Special emphasis is directed toward programs designed to provide accessibility for individuals of all abilities; security for men, women and children who are homeless; and educational opportunities for children and youth who are living in poverty.

[Wells Fargo Foundation](#)

The foundation supports organizations involved with education, employment, housing, financial education, human services, and community economic development. Special emphasis is directed toward diversity and social inclusion; economic empowerment; and environmental sustainability.

[Hampton Roads Community Foundation](#)

The mission of the Hampton Roads Community Foundation is to inspire philanthropy and transform the quality of life in southeastern Virginia.

[The WestRock Foundation](#)

The foundation supports programs designed to promote sustainable communities; education; and environmental stewardship.

[The Cameron Foundation](#)

The foundation is dedicated to providing resources that will improve both the health and quality of life for people living in the communities it serves.

[PATH Foundation](#)

The foundation is committed to honoring the legacy of community philanthropy by being good stewards of the foundation's assets and by using these assets to support the health and vitality of the community. Its goal is to enhance the region as a place where everyone has the opportunity to live, work, play and grow healthy.

[Capitol One Foundation](#)

The foundation supports programs designed to promote education with emphasis on day care and early childhood education, literacy, after school initiatives, and college access; community development with emphasis on workforce development, affordable housing, and small business development; and youth and adult financial education.

[The Harvest Foundation](#)

The foundation researches and responsibly invests in programs and initiatives to address local challenges in health, education, and community vitality.