

FEBRUARY 2012



## WHERE'S THE FOOD?

A Report on Food Insecurity and Food Access in Passaic County, New Jersey.



Presented by the United Way of Passaic County, in partnership with CUMAC.  
Funded in part by a United States Department of Agriculture Hunger-Free Community Grant.



# PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

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# PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

February 29, 2012

Dear Friends,

We are excited to share *Where's the Food? An Introduction to Food Insecurity and Food Access in Passaic County* with you. This report provides a comprehensive view of food availability, accessibility, and affordability in Passaic County.

The development of this report began a year ago when the United Way of Passaic County in partnership with CUMAC was awarded the Hunger-Free Communities Planning Grant from the USDA to study hunger in Passaic County. Through the assessment of hunger, our goal was to identify who in Passaic County is struggling to obtain food, why they are struggling and what are the solutions.

In the process of answering these questions we had the privilege of gaining valuable insight and information from over 970 residents throughout Passaic County. Through focus groups and surveys that brought us to a church in West Milford, shopping centers in Wayne, a senior center in Totowa, a food pantry in Wanaque, a child care center in Passaic and a Ramapough pow-wow, we learned firsthand key facts about food insecurity in Passaic County.

We would not have been able to complete this study without the support and partnership of dozens of community organizations and partner agencies. Our deepest thanks to our project partners: CUMAC, City Green, Dept. of Senior Services, Disability and Veteran's Affairs; Children's Day Nursery and Family Center, City of Paterson, Eva's Village, HomeCare Options, New Hope Community Ministry, NJAHC, Passaic County Dept. of Human Services, ShopRite of Passaic - Clifton, smile, Wafa House, and Well of Hope.

While many sobering facts about hunger in Passaic County are revealed in the report, we are confident that through the same collaborative effort that assessed hunger in Passaic County we will work together as a community to end hunger in Passaic County.

We believe that this report is a key to the roadmap that will steer us on our continued journey to ensure that no individual in Passaic County faces hunger. We invite you to join us on this journey.

To view this document online please visit: [unitedwaypassaic.org/whereisthefood](http://unitedwaypassaic.org/whereisthefood).

**Looking toward a hunger-free future in Passaic County!**

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**United Way of Passaic County would like to thank the following organizations for their help and cooperation with this project:**

*American Cancer Society, Bloomingdale Secretaries Association, Borough Hall, Boys and Girls Club of Clifton, Catholic Charities, Center for Family Resources, Center for Food Action, Children's Day Nursery and Family Center, City Green, City of Paterson Health and Human Services, Clifton Cafeteria Workers, Transportation Association, Community Food Bank of New Jersey, Concerned Parents for Head Start, Cooperative Extension of Passaic County, County of Passaic Planning Department, CUMAC, Department of Human Services; Passaic County Department of Senior Services; Disability and Veterans Affairs, Diocese of Paterson Schools Office, Downtown Clifton Economic Development Group Inc., Education Association of Passaic, Emergency Food Coalition, Eva's Village, Fabian Consulting Inc., Father English Community Center, Friendship Corner II Day Care, GHRC, Grandparents Relatives Care Resource Center, Greater Mercer County United Way, Haledon Education Association, Hawthorne Secretaries Association, Hawthorne Teachers Association, Hispanic Information Center, Hispanic Multipurpose Service Center, Homecare Options, Islamic Center of Passaic County, KTOW Care, Lakeland Regional Education Association, Little Falls Education Association, Love of Jesus, Manchester Regional Education Association, Medical Society of New Jersey, Mental Health Association in Passaic County, Midvale UMC, New Hope Community Ministries, NJ Community Development Corporation, NJ Farmers Against Hunger, NJ Food Bank, North Haledon Education Association, Northern New Jersey Legal Services, Northern New Jersey Maternal and Child Health Consortium, Our Lady Queen of Peace Pantry, Passaic Association of Educational Office Professions, Passaic County Board of Education, Passaic County Board of Realtors, Passaic County DHS, Passaic County DHS, Passaic County Nurses Association, Passaic County Senior Services, Passaic Valley Education Association, Passaic County Community College, Paterson Avenue UMC, Paterson Clergy Fellowship, Paterson Education Association, Paterson Family Center, Paterson Family Success Center, Paterson Food Services Association, Paterson Free Library, Paterson Free Public Library, Paterson Green Team, Paterson Habitat for Humanity, Paterson Health Department, Paterson Public Library, Pentecostal Church of God, Pompton Lakes Education Association, Prospect Park Education Association, Ramapo Lenape Tribe, Red Barn Farms, Ringwood Cafeteria Association, ShopRite, ShopRite Wayne, St. Joseph's Medical System (Wayne), St. Joseph's Medical Center, St. Mary's Food Pantry, St. Peter's Episcopal Church, St. Peter's Haven Food Pantry, Sustainable West Milford, Sweet Potato Pie, Inc., Table to Table, The Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation, Township of West Milford, True Witness Church Food Pantry, UFCW Region 1; NE, Vernon Nutrition Center, Wafa House, Wanaque Health Department, Wayne County Health Department, Wayne Health Department, Wayne Special Educational Aides, Well of Hope, West Milford Presbyterian Church, Women in Transition, and WRC Northside Food Pantry.*

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## Executive Summary

In 2008 the United Way of Passaic County conducted a county-wide needs assessment entitled *Passaic County Voices* aimed at identifying the most pressing unmet needs for County residents. This process which included community forums and surveyed 650 county residents, identified that a lack of stable income was a major need for county residents, as the national recession began to impact individuals.

As a result of this economic instability a significant portion of residents surveyed through Passaic County Voices were reporting behaviors consistent with food insecurity, limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food. These findings were confirmed by the fact that CUMAC, a key provider of food pantry services to Passaic County, saw a 33% increase between 2008 and 2009 in referrals and a 26% increase in the number of individual recipients.

Concerned by this trend the United Way partnered with CUMAC/ECHO, Inc. and other community constituents to further understand the extent of food insecurity in Passaic County and begin discussing possible solutions. Through this process it became clear that additional data was needed to efficiently and effectively develop to meet the needs of people in Passaic County who were battling hunger.

United Way of Passaic County, in partnership with CUMAC, sought and was awarded a Hunger-Free Communities Planning Grant from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), to conduct a comprehensive assessment of food insecurity in Passaic County and to create a Food Policy Council for the county. The following *Where's the Food? An Introduction to Food Insecurity and Food Access in Passaic County* report is a culmination of the assessment process that was conducted as part of the Hunger-Free Communities project.

To better understand food insecurity in Passaic County, the Hunger-Free Communities project focused on gathering data related to the factors that generally impact an individual's ability to obtain adequate food:

- Availability: Is there enough safe, nutritious food available to support everyone at all times?
- Accessibility: Can all people access the food that is available?
- Affordability: Can all people afford to purchase sufficient food through normal retail outlets?

The data presented in the report was gathered through a multi-faceted assessment process that focused on the availability, accessibility, and affordability of food in Passaic County. To gather this information the Hunger-Free Communities project utilized:

- statistical analysis of demographic data,
- surveying of key-informants and at-risk populations, and

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- focus groups with key-informants and at-risk populations.

A total of 976 residents through-out Passaic County's 16 municipalities participated in the assessment process through the completion of surveys or focus group participation. The information provided by these residents confirmed the food insecurity is a significant issues with in Passaic County.

The Hunger-Free Communities assessment found that over 32,000+ individuals in Passaic County are food insecure, meaning they are having difficulty meeting the food needs of the individuals in their household. Other key findings in the report include:

- 35% of those surveyed say "it is harder to get enough food now" than it was a year ago,
- 13% of those surveyed say they have skipped meals because there wasn't enough food,
- low income and high food cost are the greatest factors contributing to food insecurity,
- 37% of those surveyed would buy their food somewhere else if they could,
- 7% of those who are "at risk" for food insecurity receive garden produce from their own garden or someone else, and
- 17% of those surveyed buy most of their food from corner stores/bodegas.

While these facts about food insecurity are alarming, the good news is that through the Hunger-Free Communities project the United Way of Passaic County, in partnership with CUMAC, is taking active steps to reduce food insecurity in Passaic County. One such step was the convening of a Passaic County Food Policy Council in September, 2011. This group of representatives from our local communities and the local food system, including a farmer from Ringwood, a representative of City Green, Rutgers Extension, social/human service organizations (i.e., Wafa House), Paterson Housing Authority, Diocese of Paterson, and representatives of the Ramapough Lenape community, are working to ensure that all Passaic County residents have access to safe, sufficient, nutritious, and affordable foods.

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## Project Introduction

In February of 2011, United Way of Passaic County and CUMAC were awarded a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to conduct a comprehensive assessment of food insecurity in Passaic County, to create a Food Policy Council for the county, and to guide that Food Policy Council in reviewing the assessment findings and developing a “shovel-ready” plan to address food insecurity. Part of the USDA’s Hunger-Free Communities effort, this project was envisioned as the beginning of a holistic, well-rounded and community-grown effort to end hunger in Passaic County. A collaborative effort between United Way, CUMAC and other project partners, the project has three primary goals:

- to consolidate the knowledge base regarding food insecurity in Passaic County through a community-wide assessment process,
- to create a Food Policy Council for Passaic County, and
- to develop an action plan to address food insecurity in Passaic County

Ucheoma Akobundu, PhD, a registered dietician with extensive experience in research and project management, was hired as Project Director for the effort, and Fabian Consulting, Inc. (FCI) was hired as principal investigator for the community assessment. The assessment design included quantitative and qualitative data by location and by high risk population group, gathered through surveys of at-risk populations and key informants, at-risk and key informant focus groups; and maps of relevant census, food system and food security information. This report details the findings from this assessment of food insecurity in Passaic County including the locations, populations, severity, and factors impacting food security.

## Focus of the Assessment

The Passaic County Hunger-Free Communities Project focused on four key areas of inquiry:

- Who experiences food insecurity in Passaic County?
- How severe is food insecurity among these populations?
- What factors contribute to food insecurity within Passaic County?
- Where are geographic areas of food insecurity within Passaic County?

Project staff and FCI applied the most recent findings from Economic Research Services Measuring Food Security in the United States to Passaic County populations, making corrections to account for the differences between national and New Jersey percentages of food insecurity. Additionally, surveys and focus groups were utilized to collect data from people likely to experience food insecurity, people who work with food insecure and low-income people, and persons involved in the food system. We utilized mapping software to layer representations of concentrations of food-insecure populations against locations of food outlets such as grocery stores, fast-food outlets, and feeding programs to identify “food deserts.”



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## Target Populations

The assessment was targeted towards, but not limited to:

- individuals at risk of food insecurity according to USDA information, including single parents with children, adults living alone, low-income individuals, persons living in urban areas, African-American and Hispanic individuals;
- individuals at risk of food insecurity according to United Way and CUMAC's experience in Passaic County, including subsets of the categories above such as the elderly, the disabled, the unemployed, recent immigrants, low-wage workers;
- individuals involved in all aspects of the food system: production, processing, distribution, consumption, and waste management;
- individuals who interact regularly with food-insecure populations, including non-profit workers, government workers, educators, medical workers, church leaders, legal services representatives, 211 community resource specialists; and
- individuals from varying geographic regions, including: up-county, down-county, urban, suburban, semi-rural/rural

The project director specifically reached out to the Native American population in Ringwood and the Arab community in the city of Passaic to obtain their involvement in the project. The project utilized existing groups of low-income people to which project partners have access for focus group and survey information. Because our target population knows and trusts our partner community organizations, participation and responses were good. The community organizations also served as the location of some of the focus groups, helping ensure that participants felt the ease of going to a familiar place.

## Food Policy Council

The Passaic County Food Policy Council was convened and had its first organizational meeting on Sept. 13, 2011. The meeting drew 24 representatives of our local communities and the local food system, including a farmer from Ringwood, a representative of City Green, Rutgers Co-operative Agricultural Extension, social/human service organizations (i.e., Wafa House), Paterson Housing Authority, Diocese of Paterson, and representatives of the Ramapough Lenape community. The meeting was organized to provide an orientation to the history, mechanics and work of Food Policy Councils, as well as offer opportunities for those attending to participate actively in group discussion. The keynote speaker at this meeting was Mark Winne, a well-cited, highly sought-out expert in Food Policy Council development and administration. Copies of his books, *Food Rebels*, *Guerrilla Gardeners*, and *Smart Cookin' Mamas: Fighting Back in an Age of Industrial Agriculture*, were made available to the attendees at the meeting. Representatives from this initial group became the core of the Passaic County Food Policy Council. A round table with the new Food Policy Council was held December 20, 2011, and a Mini Launch of the assessment findings was held on January 25, 2012 with Food Policy Council and HFC Project Partners. Going forward, the work of the Food Policy Council is to coordinate policy-level work that will make positive change in the food security landscape in Passaic County.



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## Methodologies

### **1. Statistical Analysis**

The purpose of this evaluation was to provide practical information that can be used in the future implementation of this program. It was never intended as scientific research, and its methodologies do not follow scientific protocols, although care was taken to ensure the integrity of the data collected and the confidentiality of those participating. Most participants self-selected; however, there was some attempt at randomization through the agency surveys.

United Way of Passaic County contracted with Fabian Consulting Inc. (FCI) to work with project staff on data collection and analysis. FCI collected the following relevant data:

- 2010 census data on household composition, age, ethnicity, English proficiency by municipality;
- free and reduced price lunch statistics from all school districts,
- locations of grocery stores, mini marts, bodegas, chain restaurants, and farmers markets;
- location of low-income populations relative to locations of food distribution points, and
- location of public transportation relative to food distribution points

### **2. Surveys: At-risk and Key Informant**

Project staff collaborated with FCI to develop two surveys, one for persons at risk of food insecurity, and the other for key informants (those who work with the target populations and persons involved in the food system in some capacity). The assessment included paper (at-risk) and online (key informant) surveys, and protocols were developed for each to ensure that there were mechanisms in place to protect participants' privacy and confidentiality. Due to the difficulties of achieving a true random sampling of both food-secure and food-insecure populations, survey questions were adapted from existing USDA and other sources and focused more on reasons and coping mechanisms regarding food insecurity, with both surveys containing closed and open-response questions. Surveys for persons at risk for food insecurity were translated into Spanish and Arabic, and written at a reading level appropriate to persons with literacy levels below high school.

The at-risk survey was distributed in 27 locations throughout the county to reach as many of the targeted populations in as many of the municipalities as possible. Project staff contacted appropriate non-profit agencies, churches, pre-schools, community centers and food pantries for access to their constituents to reach those in the county who face food insecurity. The project worked to enlist organizations already trusted by residents to get responses from low-wage employees and hard-to-reach undocumented individuals. To gather input from people not being served by community service agencies, surveys were distributed and collected in front of grocery stores, through churches, as well as at the Ramapo pow-wow.

Agencies were trained on randomization methods (random self-selection, distributing to every so many people coming in the door, giving to everyone who comes in on a certain day of the week, etc.) to avoid "cherry-picking" respondents. Agencies were given no more than 1-2 weeks to distribute, gather and package surveys. Packages were picked up in person from the agencies so



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that if a problem occurred it could be addressed on the spot and then the packages of surveys were faxed to FCI for data entry and analysis. A total of 1000 surveys were printed and distributed with 889 analyzed for a response rate of 89%.

Key informant surveys were online surveys distributed by agencies and entities to their own distribution lists in such a manner that project staff were unable to determine the total number of emails sent to potential participants. A total of 51 surveys were completed and analyzed.

### **3. Focus Groups**

The project team, including FCI, developed focus group questions and protocols to provide qualitative information on food insecurity. The focus group questions were adapted from USDA focus group instructions from their toolkit. FCI staff facilitated the four at-risk focus groups with 49 participants and three key informant focus groups with 36 participants.

At-risk focus groups:

- EFNEP/Workforce NJ, Paterson (down-county) on August 12, 2011 (11 participants)
- Senior Center, Totowa (down-county) on July 28, 2011 (13 participants)
- Children’s Day Nursery, Passaic (down-county) on October 28, 2011 (11 participants, with the focus group conducted in Spanish and translated by a member of Children’s Day Nursery staff)
- Wanaque Feeds the Hungry, Wanaque, (up-county) on August 17, 2011 (14 participants)

Key informant focus groups:

- Our Lady Queen of Peace, West Milford (up-county) on July 13, 2011 (15 participants)
- OASIS Haven, Paterson, (down-county) on July 26, 2011(12 participants)
- Public Safety Academy, Wayne (down-county) on August 11, 2011 (9 participants)

During the focus groups, PowerPoint slides were shown with the questions, definitions and other information to help keep the participants focused. It was the responsibility of the project staff to secure locations, dates and times for focus groups, publicize and recruit participants for focus groups, and provide thank you gifts and catering to all participants. FCI compiled and analyzed the qualitative information gathered.

### **4. Food Insecurity Maps (SEE APPENDIX A)**

As the data were collected, project personnel utilized PolicyMap online mapping software to create overlay maps of the top risk factors, the groups most at-risk, food desert/grocery access, service utilization and access, and alternative food source locations to graphically show the specific geographic areas of food insecurity and ‘food deserts’ in the Passaic County communities.



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## PART ONE: FOOD INSECURITY BY LOCATION



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## Part One, Section A. Passaic County as a Whole

### **1. General Description**

*“When you look at economic levels county-wide, Passaic County has one of the highest standards of living in terms of income. It is a rich county when you group it all together and I think that is what is causing us problems. When you look at things county-wide it looks like we have plenty of money and that is why we are beat out for funding, but when you look at the bottom of the bottom we have serious problems that are not reflected by the numbers. The pockets of poverty are severe.” –Key Informant focus group member*

Passaic County, New Jersey is in many ways a microcosm of America. A county of some half a million residents located in Northern New Jersey, Passaic County includes the densely populated urban centers of Passaic and Paterson, surrounded by middle-class and working-class suburban areas that vary in their ethnic makeup and income distribution. Some communities, being located on major arteries leading into New York City, serve as upscale bedroom communities to commuters. But Passaic County also includes suburban, semi-rural, and rural areas, encompassing pine woods, farmland, and lake country, and is home to a community of Ramapo Native Americans.

But Passaic County is a microcosm in many ways not of the America of today, but of the America of the future. Its population is more diverse and more mobile. According to the 2010 United States Census, its population is 62.6% white (vs. 72.4% nationally), 12.8% African-American (12.6% nationally), 5% Asian (4.8% nationally), and 37% Hispanic (16.3% nationally).<sup>1</sup> It has more renters (44.9% vs. 34.9% nationally) and fewer homeowners (55.1% vs. 65.1%),<sup>2</sup> lower labor participation rates, and slightly more families below poverty level. According to the 2010 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate, Passaic County also has a much higher foreign-born population (28.5% vs. 12.9%) and residents who speak a language other than English at home (47.8% vs. 20.6%).<sup>3</sup>

Passaic County owes its significant overall diversity to its unique hourglass shape. The mountainous northwestern part of the county (“up-county”) is primarily rural and small-town in character with a significant population spread over a wide area. This is due both to its proximity and ease of commute to New York City and its inner metropolitan area, and to its designation as a watershed to the Newark Metropolitan area, with subsequent legal bans on development. The southeastern part of the county (“down-county”) is more densely-populated; its character is suburban to urban including the main population centers of Paterson (the third-largest municipality in the state), Clifton, and Passaic as well as the township of Wayne. The

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<sup>1</sup> U. S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin: 2010. 2010 United States Census. Retrieved January 14, 2012 at <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

<sup>2</sup> U. S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). General Housing Characteristics: 2010. 2010 United States Census. Retrieved January 14, 2012 at <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Selected Social Characteristics in the United States. American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate. Retrieved January 6, 2012 at <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>



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down-county section is the most demographically and economically diverse, with large minority populations and those living near or below the poverty level, particularly in the cities of Paterson and Passaic.

## 2. Area General Statistics

According to the 2010 United States Census, the population of Passaic County is 501,226 with a median annual income of \$53,993. This population includes many individuals and households from groups determined to be at risk of food insecurity on a national level by the US Department of Agriculture and on a local level by United Way of Passaic County and CUMAC. Specifically, Passaic County is home to:

- 19,423 households with children headed by a single parent
- 37,706 adults living alone
- 60,324 individuals aged 65 years and over
- 49,123 disabled individuals
- 27,906 unemployed individuals seeking work
- 49,057 individuals who immigrated to the US in the year 2000 or later
- 64,295 individuals who self-identify as African-American
- 185,677 individuals who self-identify as Hispanic or Latino (although those numbers could be up to 40% higher, based on estimates of the undocumented)
- 3,348 individuals who self-identify as Native American

## 3. Who is experiencing food insecurity?

Using the application of national and statewide USDA food security statistics on Passaic County, 4.4% of all 166,700 Passaic County households can be expected to be experiencing low food security and 2.1% of households experiencing very low food security. This means that there are approximately 22,054 individuals living in Passaic County experiencing low food security and an additional 10,631 individuals experiencing very low food security. **Therefore, food security is estimated to be a problem for approximately 32,685 individuals living in Passaic County.**

This project was designed in part to determine whether or not the groups identified by USDA and United Way/CUMAC are indeed experiencing food insecurity, and if so, which groups are most highly at risk. The following table shows the estimated number and percent of individuals from these groups experiencing food insecurity based on three different methods of estimation: 1) by applying USDA food insecurity statistics for these populations onto Passaic County population; 2) by finding the percent of individuals in these groups who reported using two or more food insecurity coping mechanisms on our At-Risk Survey and applying that percentage to the population, and 3) by noting which groups are reported likely to experience food insecurity from our Key Informant survey. While all three sources of information are valuable for different reasons, the At-Risk Survey is most likely to be reflective of the actual experience of persons in those at-risk groups in this geographic region.



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Group	USDA statistical food insecurity estimate		Number of individuals est. food insecure using at-risk survey %		Key informant survey respondents who consider this group likely to experience food insecurity	
	Number	Percent	Number	% of respondents	# of respondents	% of respondents
Single parents with children	3,302	17%	7,769	40%	40	82%
Adults living alone	2,639	7%	10,935	29%	29	58%
Elderly (over age 65)	n/a	n/a	11,462	19%	41	82%
Disabled	n/a	n/a	23,088	47%	37	74%
Unemployed/underemployed (low wage and part time)	n/a	n/a	13,116	47%	42	86%
Recent immigrants and/or language not English	n/a	n/a	20,604	42%	23	46%
African-Americans	7,715	12%	25,718	40%	27	55%
Hispanic/Latinos	27,852	15%	63,130	34%	24	49%
Native American	n/a	n/a	2,076	62%	7	15%

There were some surprises here. First, the at-risk survey group showed much higher rates of use of coping mechanisms for food insecurity than the USDA estimates for the state would indicate. This suggests that **levels of food insecurity may be higher in Passaic County than the USDA statistics for the state might indicate**. The key informants correctly identified Passaic County’s unemployed, underemployed, and disabled as experiencing food insecurity. However, **nearly two thirds of the local Native American** respondents to the At-Risk survey report resorting to two or more coping mechanisms. Only 15% of the key informants considered this group to be at risk, and Native Americans are not an ethnic group identified as an official at-risk group by the USDA. In another surprise, while 19% of Passaic County’s elderly report use of coping mechanisms – the lowest percentage of all the groups measured – 82% of key informants thought them likely to be experiencing food insecurity. A focus group of the elderly confirmed that while there are some isolated or disabled elderly who face serious food security issues, **most of the elderly in Passaic County are managing to get enough food** utilizing existing systems and resources.

Focus groups of both members of at-risk populations and of key informants identified some very specific subgroups of those experiencing food insecurity who face special challenges in getting enough safe, nutritious food for their households:

- people with dietary restrictions of different types (medical or religious),
- people with disabilities including drug and alcohol addiction,
- older people raising grandchildren, or whose adult children have moved back home,
- undocumented immigrants,
- persons who work seasonally, or only 10 months out of the year such as school workers;
- people with high medical or prescription expenses due to chronic conditions, and
- ex-offenders.



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## **4. How severe is food insecurity?**

Another question this project was designed to address is the question of severity of food insecurity in Passaic County. We focused primarily on the number of coping mechanisms used by at-risk groups to determine the severity of their food insecurity, and whether or not the respondents reported actually skipping meals because there was not enough food.

- 458 (52%) respondents to the at-risk survey cited use of one to three food insecurity coping mechanisms (less severe food insecurity)
- 129 (15%) of the at-risk survey respondents cited use of four to six food insecurity coping mechanisms (more severe food insecurity)
- 118 (13%) of the at-risk survey respondents reported skipping meals because there wasn't enough food. (more severe food insecurity.)
- In addition, 35% of the at-risk survey respondents answered affirmatively that it is harder for them to get enough food this year when compared to a year ago.

Overall, two thirds of at-risk survey respondents reported behaviors that indicate some degree of food insecurity (use of at least one coping mechanism.) Generally, USDA statistics and at-risk survey responses suggest that **between 22% and 33% of food-insecure persons in Passaic County are experiencing very low food security.**

Most of the key informant focus group participants noted that from their experience, household food insecurity in Passaic County is at least moderately severe. Specifically, most agreed with the assessment that Passaic County has one of the highest standards of living in terms of income but since funding is based on this county-wide income level those who are experiencing severe poverty aren't provided with the necessary resources for food security.

## **5. What factors impact food security?**

**Generally, the factors that impact food security fall into one of three categories:**

- **Availability:** Is there enough safe, nutritious food available to support everyone at all times?
- **Accessibility:** Can all people access the food that is available?
- **Affordability:** Can all people afford to purchase sufficient food through normal retail outlets? Affordability is usually affected by both cost and income factors, such as the price of food, the cost of living, and the income levels of area residents.

*Availability of safe, nutritious food:* The focus group participants on the whole felt that Passaic County has enough food available to feed all its residents. The question became whether enough of the available food is safe or nutritious. At-risk focus group participants reported poor quality produce and goods sold past their expiration date, especially in smaller stores and bodegas. Twenty-six percent of the respondents to the key informant survey perceive that safe and nutritious food is either somewhat or very unavailable.

Key informant survey respondents did note the availability of alternative food sources, such as farmer's markets (86% reporting the existence of one or more in the Passaic County community in which they live or work), community gardens (25% reporting availability in their community),



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Community Supported Agriculture (10% reporting availability in their community), and food co-op programs (20% reporting availability). However, most of the at-risk survey respondents do not report significant use of such food sources, other than farmers' markets, which they do use regularly during growing season. Most at-risk survey respondents (79%) receive no fresh produce from either from their own or community gardens or those of a friend or relative. Seven percent reported getting some free produce from their own or others' gardening efforts at least once a month during growing season.

*Accessibility of safe, nutritious food:* There were fewer problems with food access than expected, although there is significant difficulty with food access in some areas. Thirty percent of the respondents to the key informant survey believe that food is either somewhat inaccessible or very inaccessible. The vast majority (73%) of at-risk survey respondents get their food from major chain supermarkets with 17% getting their food from warehouse stores or superstores and another 17% from neighborhood bodegas/stores. Thirty-seven percent would get their food from somewhere else if they could, an indication of either accessibility or affordability issues. Food is usually obtained by driving to the location (73%) with 14% of the respondents either walking or riding a bicycle to get food. People reporting the most food accessibility issues tended to be those who do not own a car or are unable to drive. Food access was a greater problem in areas with a low density of food outlets and/or a lack of public transportation, such as the up-county area.

*Affordability of safe, nutritious food:* When asked why they or people they know are having difficulties obtaining enough food, 75% of people responding to the question on the at-risk survey cited affordability issues: most often lack of income, but also high food costs and high cost of living. (Other issues frequently cited were transportation issues, difficulty obtaining, benefits such as food stamps, and disability.) Fifty-one percent of the key informant respondents believe that food is either somewhat unaffordable or very unaffordable in Passaic County. The four primary factors they reported as contributing to household food insecurity in their communities were all affordability issues:

- High food costs: 86%
- High housing costs: 78%
- Unemployment: 78%
- Low wage or part-time work: 75%

As in many other parts of the U.S., Passaic County residents are experiencing high unemployment and poverty. According to the American Community Survey 2010 1-Year Estimate, the county's unemployment rate reached 11.1% in 2010, almost double the rate of 2008 (5.7%).<sup>4</sup> Passaic and two of its neighboring counties have the highest concentration of poverty in the state. Nearly sixteen percent<sup>5</sup> of Passaic County residents live at or below the poverty level and 31.8%

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<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Selected Economic Characteristics in the United States. American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate. Retrieved January 14, 2012 at <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Selected Economic Characteristics in the United States. American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate.



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live at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. Notably, between 2007 and 2010 Passaic County saw the largest increase in child poverty in the state—from 17.8% to 22.6%.<sup>6</sup> When adjusted for the “real cost of living” (the county-specific sum at which a family can cover all basic needs), Passaic County has the highest percentage of families living below this cost (32% of Passaic County families), despite the fact that it has one of the lowest real costs of living in the state.<sup>7</sup> That is not to say Passaic County prices are low; the cost of living index in Passaic County is 33% higher than the United States average – meaning that those living under the poverty level here are in effect 33% poorer than those considered poor across the U.S.<sup>8</sup>

Within Passaic County, some of the highest statewide poverty rates are concentrated in the municipalities of Passaic (27.8%) and Paterson (23.8%) as are concentrations of child poverty (Paterson: 38.9%; Passaic: 41.8%).<sup>9</sup> In Passaic, 43.5% of renters are “severely cost burdened” (paid over 50% of their income on rent) while Paterson has a rate of 31.2%. Unsurprisingly, severely cost-burdened renters were concentrated among households with incomes of \$10,000 to \$20,000 (94.4%) and \$20,000 to \$35,000 (83.9%) as well as extended up to households with incomes between \$35,000 and \$50,000 (68%). In the county as a whole 63.6%<sup>10</sup> of renters were “cost-burdened” (paid over 30% of their income on rent)<sup>11</sup> – not surprising when one considers that rents have increased in Passaic County by 59% between 2000 and 2010. As a result, 63% of renters are unable to afford Fair Market Rent (30% of one’s income), according to the National Low-Income Housing Coalition’s Out of Reach calculator. In fact, for a 2-bedroom rental, a household would need a wage of \$26.52 per hour for one full-time worker. This means, for a single-worker household to afford a 2-bedroom apartment, they would need to work 3.3 full-time jobs at minimum wage (146 hours per week.)

### 6. Maps:

- **Top Three Risk Factor Map** Municipal Boundaries, Top Three Risk Factors FOOD COSTS, PER CAPITA INCOME, HOUSING COSTS
- **Groups Most At-Risk:** DISABLED, NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS, NATIVE AMERICANS, UNEMPLOYED
- **Food Desert/Grocery Access Map** (Municipal Boundaries; Location of food outlets; Transit Access, Transit Stops, Car Ownership)

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<sup>6</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Selected Economic Characteristics in the United States. American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate.

<sup>7</sup> Legal Services of New Jersey Poverty Research Institute. (February 2010). “Poverty Benchmarks 2010: Assessing New Jersey’s Progress in Combating Poverty.” Retrieved September 14, 2010 from <http://www.lsnj.org/PDFs/budget/Benchmarks2010.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> [www.city-data.com](http://www.city-data.com)

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Selected Economic Characteristics in the United States. American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate.

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Selected Housing Characteristics. American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate. Retrieved January 14, 2012 at <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

<sup>11</sup> Legal Services of New Jersey Poverty Research Institute. (February 2010). “Poverty Benchmarks 2010: Assessing New Jersey’s Progress in Combating Poverty.” Retrieved September 14, 2010 from <http://www.lsnj.org/PDFs/budget/Benchmarks2010.pdf>



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- **Service Utilization and Access:** (Municipal Boundaries, Food Stamp/WIC utilization, School Lunch utilization, location of food stamp offices, location of food pantries and charities)
- **Alternative Food Sources** (Municipal Boundaries, Location of Farmers' Markets/CSA, Brownfields, Locations of Community Gardens)

## Part One, Section B. Up-county

### 1. Up-county General Description

Passaic County's northern, or up-county, section includes for the purposes of this project the municipalities of Bloomingdale, Pompton Lakes, Ringwood, Wanaque, and West Milford. It is a much less urban area than the southern part of the county, including upscale commuter bedroom communities, suburban, semi-rural, and rural areas. The mountainous up-county area encompasses pine woods, farmland, and lake country. Development here is limited by law, as much of the area serves as a watershed for the Newark EMA. Communities in this area are more spread out and homes more isolated than in the rest of Passaic County – West Milford alone encompasses over eighty square miles. Public transportation is limited. The up-county region is also home to a community of the Ramapough Lunaape Indian Nation, who live primarily in the Ringwood area. Statistically they are often not counted as Native American. Their tribe is recognized by both the states of New York and New Jersey, but is not officially recognized by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

### 2. Up-county General Statistics

According to the 2010 United States Census, the population of up-county is 69,329<sup>12</sup> with an average median annual income of \$43,692,<sup>13</sup> compared to the total county population of 501,226<sup>14</sup> with an average median income of \$32,795.<sup>15</sup> This population includes many individuals and households from the groups hypothesized to be at risk of food insecurity:

- 1,966 up-county households with children headed by a single parent
- 7,561 adults living alone
- 7,216 individuals aged 65 years and over

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<sup>12</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010. American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate. Retrieved January 6, 2012 at <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Earnings in the Past 12 Months (In 2010 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars. American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate. Retrieved January 19, 2012 at <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010. American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate.

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Earnings in the Past 12 Months (In 2010 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars. American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate.



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- 1,556 individuals who immigrated<sup>16</sup> to the US in the year 2000 or later
- 302 individuals who self-identify as African-American
- 1,379 individuals who self-identify as Hispanic or Latino (although those numbers could be up to 40% higher, based on estimates of the undocumented)
- 180 individuals who self-identify as Native American according to the census.

### **3. Who is experiencing food insecurity up-county?**

Using the application of national and statewide USDA food security statistics on up-county census data, 4.4% of all Passaic County households can be expected to be experiencing low food security and 2.1% households experiencing very low food security. This means that out of 22,602<sup>17</sup> up-county households, approximately 995 are experiencing low food security and an additional 475 households are experiencing very low food security. **Therefore, food security is estimated to be a problem for approximately 1,470 up-county households.**

The following table shows the estimated number (where available) and percent of individuals from these groups experiencing food insecurity in the up-county area based on three different methods of estimation: 1) by applying USDA food insecurity statistics for New Jersey onto the up-county population; 2) by finding the percent of individuals in these groups who reported using two or more food insecurity coping mechanisms on our At-Risk Survey and applying that percentage to the population, and 3) by noting which groups were reported likely to experience food insecurity from our Key Informant survey.

*(Note: we were unable to extract a count of disabled or unemployed individuals from 2010 census data broken out by up-county as of the date of this report.)*

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<sup>16</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Selected Social Characteristics in the United States. American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate. Retrieved January 14, 2012 at <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

<sup>17</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Households and Families: 2010. 2010 United States Census. Retrieved August 19, 2011 at <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>



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Up-county At-risk Group	USDA statistical food insecurity estimate		Number of individuals est. food insecure using at-risk survey %		Key informant survey respondents who consider this group likely to experience food insecurity	
	Number	Percent	Number	% of respondents	# of respondents	% of respondents
Single parents with children	334	17%	1,494	76%	5	83%
Adults living alone	529	7%	4,537	60%	4	67%
Elderly (over age 65)	n/a	n/a	2,904	40%	5	83%
Disabled	n/a	n/a	n/a	69%	5	83%
Unemployed/underemployed (low wage and part time)	n/a	n/a	n/a	71%	5	83%
Recent immigrants and/or language not English	n/a	n/a	n/a	55%	2	33%
African-Americans	36	12%	302	100%	2	33%
Hispanic/Latinos	207	15%	731	53%	2	33%
Native American	n/a	n/a	180	100%	2	33%

Generally, a much higher percentage of individuals from every category completing the at-risk survey in the up-county area reported using coping mechanisms for food insecurity, suggesting that **food insecurity may be more of a problem up-county than down-county**. Overall, 85% of at-risk survey respondents reported behaviors that indicate some degree of food insecurity, as opposed to two-thirds of respondents in the whole county. However, the disparity may be due in part to the fact that food pantries were a key contact point for survey distribution up-county. More data examination is suggested to examine that possibility. **All of the local African-American and Native American** respondents to the At-Risk Survey report resorting to at least two coping mechanisms for food insecurity. However, only 33% of the key informants considered either group to be at risk. And while food security among the elderly is lower than among the other up-county at-risk groups, they experience food insecurity at over twice the rate as the elderly living in the rest of the county.

#### **4. How severe is food insecurity up-county?**

To determine severity, we focused primarily on the number of coping mechanisms used by at-risk groups to determine the severity of their food insecurity, and whether or not the survey respondents reported actually skipping meals because there was not enough food. The severity of food security appears to be worse up-county than in the county as a whole, although more data analysis is needed to confirm this. **The proportion of respondents citing use of four to six coping mechanisms and skipping meals was more than double that of respondents from the county as a whole.**

- 50 (47%) up-county respondents to the at-risk survey cited use of one to three food insecurity coping mechanisms (less severe food insecurity.) This is 5% lower than the rate for respondents from the county as a whole (52%.)



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- 40 (38%) of the up-county at-risk survey respondents cited use of four to six food insecurity coping mechanisms (more severe food insecurity.) This is 20% higher than the rate for respondents from the county as a whole (15%.)
- 30 (28%) of the up-county at-risk survey respondents reported skipping meals because there wasn't enough food (more severe food insecurity.) This is 15% higher than the rate for respondents from the county as a whole.
- In addition, 42% of the up-county at-risk survey respondents answered affirmatively that it is harder for them to get enough food this year when compared to a year ago. This is 7% higher than the rate for respondents from the county as a whole.

There were only 6 key informant survey respondents located up-county with 4 (67%) responding that household food insecurity is either a severe problem or a problem in their community. This is a very small sample size; however, the percentage is consistent with the results from the other sources.

### **5. What factors impact food security?**

The most common reasons for food insecurity according to at-risk focus group participants up-county were affordability and access issues: unemployment, underemployment, lack of transportation, the cost of medication and declining health.

*Availability of safe, nutritious food:* **Food availability appears to be less of a problem in the up-county area than in the county as a whole.** Seventeen percent of up-county respondents to the key informant survey perceive that safe and nutritious is either somewhat or very unavailable, significantly fewer than either the 26% of respondents from the county as a whole or the 27% of key informant survey respondents from down-county. Focus groups did not present availability of food to be a major issue in this geographic area.

**Alternative food sources appear to be more readily available up-county than in the county as a whole.** One hundred percent of up-county key informant survey respondents reported the existence of one or more farmer's markets in the community in which they live or work, as opposed to 84% of key informants down-county and 86% of key informants in the county as a whole. Fifty percent of up-county key informants reported the availability of community gardens, as opposed to 22% of key informants down-county 25% in Passaic County as a whole. Key Informant focus group members up-county mentioned a community garden run by an organization on land donated by a single family. They mentioned that at one point there was talk of another but the wetland issues caused the project to be abandoned. Seventeen percent reported the availability of Community Supported Agriculture in their communities (9% down-county and 10% in the county as a whole), and 33% reported availability food co-op programs up-county (18% down-county and 20% in the county as a whole.) No at-risk focus group participants in this area had knowledge of up-county community gardens, CSA programs, or food co-op programs; however, they knew of two local farmers' markets and several reported utilizing them during growing season. Key Informant participants mentioned another farmers market which sells food grown in NY State.



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Although there is not much farmland in upper Passaic County because it is a mountainous area, there is still more land available for home gardening than in other parts of the county. Accordingly, a somewhat **higher proportion of people up-county get free fresh produce from either their own gardening efforts or those of a friend or relative**. Nine percent of up-county at-risk survey respondents reported getting some free produce from their own or others' gardening efforts at least once a month during growing season, as opposed to 7% for both down-county and in the county as a whole. Nearly a third of up-county at-risk focus group participants reported consuming produce from their personal gardens or those of friends and neighbors during the growing season. Still, as in the rest of the county, the majority of people living up-county get no food from home gardening -- 59% of up-county at-risk survey respondents receive no home-grown produce, nor do 83% of respondents down-county or 79% of respondents in the county as a whole.

**Disturbingly, focus group information reveals that much of the up-county land occupied by the Ramapough is contaminated with heavy metals and ground pollution, and they have been advised not to eat food grown in that soil. Many of them, facing high levels of food insecurity, do so anyway.** (See section on Native Americans.) But one key informant stated that there are inexpensive and safe ways of removing such pollution through a combination of growing certain types of plants and allowing land to lie fallow, called phyto-remediation. For example, growing mustard removes lead, and other plants remove cadmium and mercury. This merits further study to help improve the safety of food grown by the Ramapough, as well as in community gardens throughout Passaic County.

*Accessibility of safe, nutritious food:* **The up-county focus groups reported food accessibility as much more of a problem in this area than availability, particularly for the elderly, disabled, adults living alone, and those in low income areas without access to a car.** Members of both at-risk and key informant focus groups up-county expressed worry about isolated elderly in the area being able to access food. According to focus group respondents, there is very little coordinated public transportation in that region. One key informant stated that "This area is suburban. Suburban assumes car access. It is not viable to have public transportation here." They said that there are two supermarkets located within a mile of each other in West Milford that serve an area of over eighty square miles. According to the at-risk survey, 85% of up-county respondents from get their food from such major chain supermarkets (13% of at-risk respondents up-county get their food from warehouse stores or superstores and another 11% from community or government programs.)

With relatively few food outlets spread over a large geographic area, food is almost always obtained by car, with up-county with respondents to the at-risk survey either driving themselves (77%) or arranging for someone else to drive them (18%.) Focus group respondents reported driving, getting a ride with a friend or relative, walking, or taking a taxi to the grocery store. Only one participant mentioned taking a bus, and he stated that he usually borrows a family members' car to get to the supermarket. One participant stated that a store which is walking distance away from his home takes ten to fifteen minutes by taxi because the driver will take the long way to increase his fare, but that he couldn't walk because his mother was physically unable to walk to the store.



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Approximately a third (31%) of up-county at-risk respondents would get their food from somewhere else if they could, an indication of either accessibility or affordability issues. At-risk focus group members consider stores like Whole Foods of higher quality but too expensive, and warehouse stores as too inconveniently located. One at-risk focus group respondent stated that he “would like to go to Costco or BJ’s to save money, but they are far and I don’t have transportation to get to them. I don’t want to take the bus when I have so many bags to carry.” One difficulty mentioned regarding farmers markets was that in addition to physical inaccessibility, those markets are generally open during regular business hours, making it impossible for many employed people to take advantage of them.

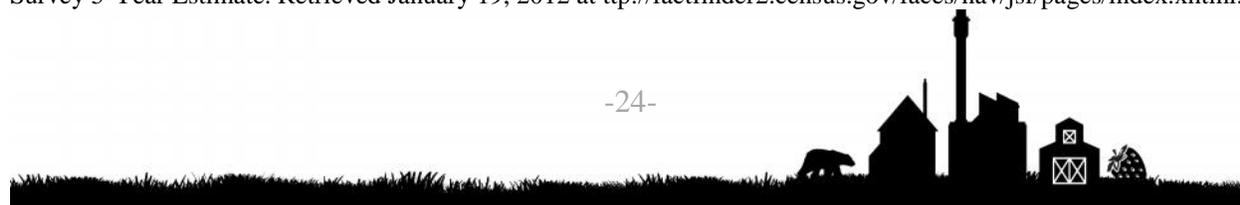
Up-county respondents to the key informant survey were more likely to believe food to be inaccessible than other respondents (33% up-county, 29% down-county, and 30% from the county as a whole.) The key informant focus group did acknowledge that transportation is a major issue for many people who cannot reach supermarkets through public transportation. One informant mentioned that at one point there was an attempt by the department of transportation to provide a bus for seniors but they only made stops on Ringwood Avenue and not everyone was able to get there. One key informant knew of a man over ninety years old who was told that it would take him six months to be added to the list for Meals on Wheels.

*Affordability of safe, nutritious food:* Affordability is an issue in the up-county area, although not quite as much as in other areas of Passaic County. Thirty-three percent of the up-county key informant respondents believe that food is either somewhat unaffordable or very unaffordable up-county, as opposed to 51% both down-county and from the county as a whole. The price of food appears to have increased significantly in recent months as well as over the past several years as a whole. One key informant mentioned formerly spending seventy dollars a week on groceries, but that in the previous five months that number had increased to one hundred dollars. Adding to the cost of food is the increasing cost of transportation. Several participants also mentioned the income cap on food stamps as being problematic, since only income is considered and not necessary expenses.

**Unemployment is higher but poverty lower up-county than down-county.** According to the American Community Survey 2010 5-Year Estimate,<sup>18</sup> the up-county unemployment rate reached 8.8% in 2010 (it was 7.5% down-county; these numbers may be slightly depressed in comparison to the overall county unemployment figures as the up- and down-county statistics were taken from the 5-year survey, whereas county statistics were taken from the 1-year survey.) Three percent of up-county residents live at or below the poverty level (17.1% down-county) and 11.2% live at or below 200% of the federal poverty level (36.1% down-county.) The level of child poverty in the up-county is 0.7%. These levels are much lower than those of the county as a whole. However, there are severe pockets of food insecurity by at-risk group and location. Focus group informants stated that those who are receiving government help in the form of unemployment, disability or food stamps were cited as having a difficult situation because if they

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<sup>18</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months. American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate. Retrieved January 19, 2012 at <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>.



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get a job they will lose their government aid and likely end up with even greater food insecurity than before.

The difficulties up-county tend to concentrate in small, scattered areas of financial disparity. Key informant focus group members mentioned that the upper Passaic area is often passed over in government legislation because of its overall general affluence. One key-informant mentioned that “upper Ringwood has always been a struggling area because of political structure and the environmental situation; it has always been avoided and disregarded.” There was also mention of a large percentage of seniors in the upper Ringwood area. However, single parents appear to be among those struggling most with food insecurity up-county. (See later sections on at-risk groups for more information.)

### 6. Maps:

- **Up-county Food Desert/Grocery Access Map** (Municipal Boundaries; Location of Stores, Restaurants and Fast Food; Transit Access, Transit Stops)
- **Groups Most At-Risk:** African-Americans, Native Americans, Single Parents, Elderly
- **Service Utilization and Access:** (Municipal Boundaries, Food Stamp/WIC utilization, School Lunch utilization, location of food stamp offices, location of food pantries & charities)
- **Alternative Food Sources** (Municipal Boundaries, Location of Farmers’ Markets/CSA, Brownfields, Locations of Community Gardens)



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## Part One, Section C: Down-county

### 1. Down-county General Description

The southern section of Passaic County (the bottom of the hourglass shape) is known as down-county. Down-county includes for the purposes of this assessment the municipalities of Clifton, Haledon, Hawthorne, Little Falls, North Haledon, Passaic, Paterson, Prospect Park, Totowa, Wayne and Woodland Park. This area includes the densely populated urban centers of Passaic and Paterson, surrounded by middle-class and working-class suburban areas that vary in their ethnic makeup and income distribution.

### 2. Down-county General Statistics

According to the 2010 United States Census, the down-county population is 431,897<sup>19</sup> with an average median annual income of \$31,292<sup>20</sup>, compared to the total county population of 501,226<sup>21</sup> with an average median income of \$32,795.<sup>22</sup> Specifically, down-county is home to:

- 21,499 households with children headed by a single parent
- 29,639 adults living alone
- 28,408 individuals aged 65 years and over
- 43,097 individuals who immigrated to the US in the year 2000 or later.<sup>23</sup>
- 19,150 individuals who self-identify as African-American
- 50,468 individuals who self-identify as Hispanic or Latino (although those numbers could be up to 40% higher, based on estimates of the undocumented)
- 426 individuals who self-identify as Native American

*(Note: we were unable to extract a count of disabled or unemployed individuals from 2010 census data broken out by down-county as of the date of this report.)*

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<sup>19</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010. American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate. Retrieved January 6, 2012 at <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

<sup>20</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Earnings in the Past 12 Months (In 2010 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars. American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate. Retrieved January 19, 2012 at <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

<sup>21</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010. American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate.

<sup>22</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Earnings in the Past 12 Months (In 2010 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars. American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate.

<sup>23</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Selected Social Characteristics in the United States. American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate. Retrieved January 14, 2012 at <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>



# PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

## 3. Who is experiencing food insecurity down-county?

Using the application of national and statewide USDA food security statistics on down-county, 4.4% of all Passaic County households can be expected to be experiencing low food security and 2.1% households experiencing very low food security. **This means that there are approximately 6,232 down-county households experiencing low food security and an additional 2,974 households experiencing very low food security. Therefore, food security is estimated to be a problem for approximately 9,206 down-county households. However, our at-risk survey information indicates that the number could be significantly higher.**

The following table shows the estimated number (where available) and percent of individuals from these groups experiencing food insecurity in the up-county area based on three different methods of estimation: 1) by applying USDA food insecurity statistics for New Jersey onto the up-county population; 2) by finding the percent of individuals in these groups who reported using two or more food insecurity coping mechanisms on our At-Risk Survey and applying that percentage to the population, and 3) by noting which groups were reported likely to experience food insecurity from our Key Informant survey.

Down-county At-risk Group	USDA	statistical	Number of individuals		Key informant survey	
	food	insecurity	est. food insecure	est. food insecure	respondents who consider	respondents who consider
	estimate	percent	using at-risk survey	using at-risk survey	this group likely to experi-	this group likely to experi-
	Number	Percent	Number	% of	# of	% of
				respondents	respondents	respondents
<b>Single parents with children</b>	3,655	17%	7,955	37%	35	78%
<b>Adults living alone</b>	2,075	7%	8,299	28%	25	56%
<b>Elderly (over age 65)</b>	n/a	n/a	4,829	17%	36	80%
<b>Disabled</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	43%	32	71%
<b>Unemployed/underemployed (low wage and part time)</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	43%	37	82%
<b>Recent immigrants</b>	n/a	n/a	17,670	41%	21	47%
<b>African-Americans</b>	2,298	12%	7,469	39%	25	56%
<b>Hispanic/Latinos</b>	7,570	15%	16,654	33%	22	49%
<b>Native American</b>	n/a	n/a	115	27%	5	11%

As in the county as a whole and in the up-county area, the at-risk survey group showed much higher rates of use of coping mechanisms for food insecurity than the USDA estimates for the state would indicate. This suggests that **levels of food insecurity may be higher down-county than USDA statistics for the state might indicate.** The key informant survey respondents from down-county correctly identified the unemployed, underemployed, and disabled as experiencing food insecurity as identified by at-risk survey respondent use of coping mechanisms. However, **27% of the local Native American** respondents to the At-Risk survey report resorting to coping mechanisms. Only 11% of the key informants considered this group to be at risk, and Native



## PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

Americans are not an ethnic group identified as an official at-risk group by the USDA. Food insecurity of the elderly was overestimated by key informants here, as in the county as a whole and as up-county. While 17% of down-county elderly report use of coping mechanisms – the lowest percentage of all groups measured -- 80% of the key informants thought them likely to be experiencing food insecurity. Focus group respondents consistently pointed to the elderly, particularly those with dietary restrictions and disease, single parents, the unemployed or under-employed, and those without transportation as at-risk of food insecurity down-county.

### **4. How severe is food insecurity down-county?**

**While numbers of the food insecure are much higher down-county due to a larger population, food insecurity appears to be less severe down-county than up-county, perhaps due to a greater density of food sources and support services.** A higher percentage of down-county at-risk survey respondents report mild food insecurity as measured by use of coping mechanisms, but demonstrate more severe food insecurity at about one-third to half the rate of their up-county neighbors.

- 409 (52%) down-county respondents to the at-risk survey cited use of one to three food insecurity coping mechanisms (less severe food insecurity), compared to 47% of up-county respondents and equal to the percentage from all at-risk respondents.
- 88 (11%) of the down-county at-risk survey respondents cited use of four to six food insecurity coping mechanisms (more severe food insecurity), compared to 38% of the up-county respondents and 15% of all at-risk respondents.
- 88 (11%) of the down-county at-risk survey respondents reported skipping meals because there wasn't enough food (more severe food insecurity) compared to 28% of up-county respondents and 13% of all at-risk respondents.
- In addition, 32% of the down-county at-risk survey respondents report that it is harder for them to get enough food this year when compared to a year ago compared to 42% of the up-county at-risk survey respondents and 35% of all at-risk respondents.

From their experience, 38 (84%) of the down-county key informants think that household food insecurity is a problem or a severe problem in their Passaic County community. This compares to 82% for all the key informant respondents. Significantly, 47% of the down-county key informant survey respondents think that food insecurity is a severe problem compared with 43% of all key informant respondents.

### **5. What factors impact food security?**

*Availability of safe, nutritious food:* The down-county focus group participants on the whole felt that there is a sufficient quantity of food available to feed all residents. The question became whether enough of the available food is safe or nutritious. Twenty-seven percent of down-county respondents to the key informant survey perceive that safe and nutritious food is either somewhat or very unavailable in their communities. At-risk focus group participants reported poor quality produce and goods sold past their expiration date, especially in smaller stores and bodegas. A key-informant stated that “Where there are bodegas, you don’t get a good value for



## PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

the money. Fresh food is not a prevalent in these establishments. You might see pockets where there is not fresh food available.” The general consensus among key informant participants was that the down-county area has a high accessibility to fast food and packaged foods, but not to fresh, nutritious foods. Perhaps as a direct result of this, it was also mentioned a few times that people spend all their money on pre-packaged “fast” food because they do not know how to cook fresh food.

Down-county key informant survey respondents did note some availability of alternative food sources, such as farmer’s markets (84% reporting the existence of one or more in the down-county community in which they live or work), community gardens (22% reporting availability in their community), Community Supported Agriculture (9% reporting availability), and food co-op programs (18% reporting availability.) However, most of the at-risk focus group participants do not report significant use of such food sources, or even knowledge of their existence, with the exception of farmers’ markets, which they do use regularly during growing season. Probably due in part to lack of access to arable land in this more urban region, only 7% of down-county at-risk survey respondents report receiving fresh produce from either their own gardening efforts or those of a friend or relative once a month or more during growing season.

*Accessibility of safe, nutritious food:* While there are some food access issues down-county, there were fewer such problems than expected. Twenty-nine percent of the down-county respondents to the key informant survey believe that safe, nutritious food is either somewhat inaccessible or very inaccessible (compared to 33% of up-county respondents.) Use of an automobile is the primary method of accessing food down-county as it is up-county, but a much higher percentage report using other means. Forty-eight percent of at-risk respondents report driving to get food, another 22% arrange for someone else to drive them, 15% walk or ride a bicycle, 8% rely on public transportation and 2% take taxis At risk focus group respondents down-county report borrowing friends’ or relatives’ cars to drive to get food.

That being said, several focus group participants mentioned transportation as a major factor affecting food insecurity. One senior citizen mentioned that being handicapped makes it difficult to get to the grocery store, and family members and friends are unable to drive her with her wheelchair. Others mentioned paying friends and relatives to drive them to the store rather than having to pay a larger amount for a taxi. Elderly participants reported being within walking distance of stores or having accessible public transportation, but being unable to utilize it because they were unable to carry their bags over that great a distance.

More down-county residents get their food from sources other than supermarkets: 71% of down-county at-risk survey respondents get their food from major chain supermarkets, compared to 85% up-county. Eighteen percent of down-county at-risk survey respondents get their food from neighborhood bodegas or stores, 17% from warehouse stores, and another 13% from community or government programs. Approximately a third (34%) would get their food from somewhere else if they could, an indication of either accessibility or affordability issues. In regards to community farming, one key informant mentioned in a focus group that community gardening is not safe in certain urban areas. They knew of two people who were shot while in a particular community garden.



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*Affordability of safe, nutritious food:* Affordability of food appears to be the primary food security issue for the down-county area, mostly due to low incomes relative to the cost of living. Fifty-one percent of the down-county key informant respondents reported that safe, nutritious food is either somewhat or very unaffordable (compared to 49% for all key informant respondents). According to the American Community Survey 2010 5-Year Estimate<sup>24</sup>, the down-county unemployment rate reached 7.5% in 2010, compared to 8.8% up-county. The Living Wage Calculator of Pennsylvania State University estimates that a Passaic County family of four needs \$66,640 per year to achieve a minimum – not middle class – standard of living. But in 2010, **over half of down-county residents lived on incomes at or below 200% of the federal poverty level**, or \$44,226 for a family of four. (Thirteen percent of up-county residents live at those income levels.) 17.1% of down-county residents live at or below the poverty level and 36.1% live at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. The level of child poverty in the down-county is 6.7%., compared to 0.7% up-county.

**Down-county at-risk focus group participants named unemployment as the biggest challenge to the affordability of safe, nutritious food.** Other reasons included the cost of medications, underemployment, and the cost of child care. Another factor which was mentioned in some of the down-county focus groups was the difficulty of affording food in the winter for those who are seasonally employed or who work out-doors, such as construction workers. Mothers of small children, whether single or not, were mentioned as often being unable to work because they cannot find affordable, safe childcare.

Key Informants reported in focus groups that the cost of certain necessary items, such as infant formula, are higher in down-county urban areas, and the items are often of a lower quality. They believe that this is because shop owners realize that those living in urban areas are more likely to be recipients of WIC. There appears to be a paradoxical effect in which grocery items are cheaper in the wealthier areas because people have more choice and better transportation. Those with lower incomes have fewer options and markets increase the price of certain staples because they know that they are covered by certain programs.

Community programs are finding it difficult to provide for an increasing number of clients. One key informant stated that “we used to provide full course meals, but now it’s maybe a pack of rice and a can of something. I’ve never seen greens. That stuff is limited right down to the expiration dates. The pantries are trying to help families in need but are limited by the quality that they even receive.” Another key informant stated that their pantry (Eva’s Village) has seen a steady 20 percent increase per year in clients coming in since 2007.

Several at-risk participants discussed the availability and the effectiveness of government and community programs such as Food Stamps, WIC and food pantries. Many of them utilize the pantries and either do or have at some point received government assistance. Both at-risk participants and key informants mentioned that at a very modest income level food stamps will

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<sup>24</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months. American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate. Retrieved January 19, 2012 at <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>



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not provide aid, which results in several people who may have more children or a higher cost of living being denied help. One key informant mentioned that undocumented immigrants have a particular fear of applying for assistance, even when the program does not endanger their status. Despite this, food stamps and WIC were both rated as being very helpful and effective when utilized and distributed properly.

### 6. Maps:

- **Top Three Risk Factor Map** (Municipal Boundaries, Top Three Risk Factors) Poverty, Unemployment, Food Stamp/WIC utilization
- **Groups Most At-Risk:** Unemployed, Disabled, Recent Immigrants
- **Alternative Food Sources** (Municipal Boundaries, Location of Farmers' Markets/CSA, Locations of Community Gardens)



# PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

## PART TWO: FOOD INSECURITY BY ETHNICITY



# PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

## Part Two, Section A. Ethnic Minorities: African-Americans

### 1. Group Characteristics

African-American individuals are considered to be at risk of food insecurity according to USDA national research. According to the 2010 United States Census, there are 64,295 individuals who self-identify as African-American living in Passaic County. Our research indicates that of those 64,295 individuals, between 7,715 (USDA estimates) and 25,718 (At-Risk Survey estimates) Passaic County African-Americans are experiencing some degree of food insecurity.

### 2. Severity of Food Insecurity for African-Americans

**According to usage of food insecurity coping mechanisms as measured by the At-Risk Survey, African-Americans appear to be experiencing food insecurity at a slightly higher rate than at-risk survey respondents from the county as a whole. In addition, food insecurity appears to be somewhat more severe among African Americans than among respondents from the county as a whole.**

- 100 (68.5%) African-American respondents to the at-risk survey demonstrated some degree of food insecurity as measured by use of coping mechanisms as compared to 66% of all respondents.
- 72 (49%) African-American respondents to the at-risk survey cited use of one to three food insecurity coping mechanisms (less severe food insecurity.) This is 3% lower than the rate for all respondents (52%.)
- **28 (19%) of the African-American at-risk survey respondents cited use of four to six food insecurity coping mechanisms (more severe food insecurity) which is 4% higher than the 15% for all respondents.**
- **25 (17%) of the African-American at-risk survey respondents reported skipping meals because there wasn't enough food. (more severe food insecurity.) This is 4% higher than the rate for all respondents (13%).**
- In addition, 29% of the African-American at-risk survey respondents answered affirmatively that it is harder for them to get enough food this year when compared to a year ago. This is 6% lower than the rate for all respondents (35%).

### 3. Primary Issues of Food Security for African-Americans

*Availability of safe, nutritious food:* As noted in the previous section, a sufficient quantity of food seems to be available to African-Americans in Passaic County. The question becomes whether enough of that food is safe or nutritious. Two of the eight (25%) African-American key informant survey respondents perceived that safe and nutritious food is either somewhat or very unavailable, very similar to 26% of all respondents to the key informant survey.

African-Americans do not appear to vary significantly from other at-risk groups as regards where they get their food, although they are more likely to report getting food from community or government programs. 75% of African-American at-risk survey respondents (compared to 73% of



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all respondents) get their food from major chain supermarkets with 19% reporting getting food from warehouse stores or superstores (compared to 17% of all respondents) and another 19% from community or government programs (compared to 13% of all respondents). Focus group participants from a predominantly African-American at-risk focus group held in Paterson mentioned getting groceries from large supermarkets but there was also a talk about use of neighborhood markets, such as a Pilipino market and a Dominican market.

The African American key informant survey respondents differed in their awareness of alternative food sources in their communities from all key informant survey respondents as follows:

- all (100%) of the African-American key informant survey respondents reported their awareness of farmers markets, compared to 86% of all respondents;
- 13% of the African-American key informant survey respondents reported their awareness of community gardens, compared to 25% of all respondents;
- 13% of the African-American key informant survey respondents reported their awareness of Community Supported Agriculture, compared to 10% of all respondents); and
- 13% of the African-American key informant survey respondents reported their awareness of food co-op programs, compared to 20% of all respondents

When asked about alternative sources of food, particularly fresh produce, two participants from the at-risk focus group mentioned two farmers markets, but some said that they were too far away to be convenient. Participants were not aware of the existence of any community gardens, CSAs or food co-ops.

According to the At-Risk Survey, fewer African-Americans in Passaic County benefit from home-grown produce than other at-risk groups. Five percent of African-American survey respondents (as compared to 7% of all respondents) reported getting some free produce from their own or others' gardening efforts at least once a month during growing season, and 85% of African-American residents report receiving no home-grown produce at all (compared to 79% of all respondents.)

Two participants from the aforementioned focus group said that they grow several varieties of vegetables in their back yards, and another participant mentioned that one of the members at her church grows and brings in collard greens for whoever wants it about once a month during growing season. None of the other participants of that focus group grew their own food or received any percentage of their diet from personal or community gardens

*Accessibility of safe, nutritious food:* Since our research suggests that fewer African-American respondents may own a car than members of other groups, access to food is at least somewhat of an issue for this population. Most African-American respondents to the at-risk survey obtain their food by car, with 68% either driving themselves (47%) or arranging for someone else to drive them (21%.) This compares to 73% of all respondents, of whom 51% drive to get food themselves and 22% have another person drive them. Nineteen percent of African-American



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respondents usually get their food by walking or riding a bicycle, compared to 14% of all respondents.

The at-risk focus group participants almost exclusively mentioned walking, taking public transportation or borrowing a car from a friend or family member to get to the grocery store. Only one participant mentioned driving his own vehicle. Focus group participants mentioned food being less accessible in the winter because so many people go to the store on foot and the weather is so harsh.

*Affordability of safe, nutritious food:* **It appears that food affordability is the primary food security issue for African Americans in Passaic County.** Focus group participants were emphatic on this issue. When asked why people are unable to afford food, the most common response was unemployment. Several people were in agreement that the end of the month and the winter are particularly hard times for many people because by the end of the month SNAP assistance runs out, and in the winter outdoor workers are frequently without income.

The income qualifications for SNAP assistance were mentioned as increasing food insecurity. One participant stated that “if they find out you’re making anything they will strip it all away from you.” That being said, when asked which programs are working the best, SNAP was considered the most effective, while churches and food pantries were listed second. Despite the income criteria, people preferred SNAP because it allows them freedom of choice in what to purchase.

When asked what people in the community do to address food insecurity, the responses in the focus group were varied, and indicative of very low food security among some community members. Several reported going to family members or community or government programs for help getting food. Oasis, CUMAC, SNAP (food stamps) and Eva’s Kitchen were listed as having effective programs. Other focus group members mentioned selling their belongings: “anything; cars, clothes, jewelry.” Others spoke of people skipping meals or going without to see that their children were fed. One person said, “Some people just do without. They go to bed without food.” Another added that in times of difficulty, people will feed their children and not themselves. They also told of people “hustling,” selling drugs, begging and stealing in order to feed themselves and their families.

### 5. Map: SEE APPENDIX A

- With municipal boundaries, show African-American population, income, and food stamp usage (indication of food affordability)



# PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

## Part Two, Section B. Ethnic Minorities: Hispanics/Latinos

### 1. Group Characteristics

According to the 2010 United States Census, there are 185,677 individuals who self-identify as Hispanic or Latino living in Passaic County (although those numbers could be up to 40% higher, based on estimates of the undocumented from studies in other parts of New Jersey.<sup>25</sup>) Hispanics/Latinos are considered to be at risk of food insecurity according to USDA national research. Our research indicates that of those 185,677 individuals, between 27,852 (USDA estimates) and 63,130 (At-Risk Survey estimates) Passaic County Hispanics/Latinos are experiencing some degree of food insecurity, not counting the undocumented.

### 2. Severity of Food Insecurity for Hispanics/Latinos

**According to usage of food insecurity coping mechanisms as measured by the At-Risk Survey, Hispanics/Latinos appear to be experiencing food insecurity at a slightly lower rate than at-risk survey respondents from the county as a whole. In addition, food insecurity appears to be somewhat less severe among Hispanics/Latinos than among all at-risk survey respondents.**

- 228 (64.2%) Hispanic/Latino at-risk survey respondents demonstrated some degree of food insecurity as measured by use of coping mechanisms as compared to 66% of all respondents.
- 195 (55%) Hispanic/Latino at-risk survey respondents cited use of one to three food insecurity coping mechanisms (less severe food insecurity.) This is 3% higher than the rate for all respondents (52%).
- 33 (9%) of the Hispanic/Latino at-risk survey respondents cited use of four to six food insecurity coping mechanisms (more severe food insecurity) which is 6% lower than the 15% of all respondents.
- 35 (10%) of the Hispanic/Latino at-risk survey respondents reported skipping meals because there wasn't enough food. (more severe food insecurity.) This is 3% lower than the rate for all respondents (13 %).
- In addition, 34% of the Hispanic/Latino-American at-risk survey respondents answered that it is harder for them to get enough food this year compared to a year ago. This is nearly identical to the rate for all respondents from the county as a whole (35%).

### 3. Primary Issues of Food Security for Hispanic/Latinos

*Availability of safe, nutritious food:* Food is widely available to Hispanics/Latinos in Passaic County, but not all of it is of sufficient quality. Key informant survey respondents are particularly concerned about the availability of safe, nutritious food: four of the six (67%) Hispanic/Latino key informant survey respondents perceived that safe and nutritious food is either somewhat or very unavailable, as compared to 26% of all key informant survey respondents.

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<sup>25</sup> Escobar-Haskins, L. (2004) "Latinos in Mercer County, New Jersey: A Reflection of the Changing Latino Population in the Northeast." Prepared for the United Way of Greater Mercer County.



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Sixty-four percent of Hispanic/Latino at-risk survey respondents (compared to 73% of all respondents) get their food from major chain supermarkets and 23% get their food from neighborhood bodegas (compared to 17% of all respondents. (Fifteen percent reporting getting food from warehouse stores or superstores, compared to 17% of all respondents; and 15% from community or government programs, compared to 13% of all respondents.)

Participants in a Spanish-language at-risk focus group conducted in the city of Passaic reported using major grocery stores as their primary food source. When asked why, several participants reported that the stores are close enough to walk to or that the supermarket delivers to their home. Several of the participants were not happy with the quality of the food that they usually purchase, stating that the Spanish products are too expensive and that the food is often expired. Two participants stated that the produce is not fresh.

### **The Hispanic/Latino key informant survey respondents were much more aware of alternative food sources in their communities than all key informant survey respondents:**

- all (100%) of the Hispanic/Latino key informant survey respondents reported awareness of farmers markets in their communities, compared to 86% of all respondents;
- 50% of the Hispanic/Latino key informant survey respondents reported awareness of community gardens in their communities, compared to 25% of all respondents,
- 33% of the Hispanic/Latino key informant survey respondents reported awareness of Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs) in their communities, compared to 10% of all respondents), and
- 50% of the Hispanic/Latino key informant survey respondents reported their awareness of food co-op programs, compared to 20% of all respondents.

**However, this knowledge was not shared by the Spanish-language at-risk focus group members.** When asked about their knowledge of alternative food sources such as farmers markets, CSAs, community gardens, or food co-ops, one at-risk focus group participant mentioned a small farmers market behind Corrado's Market. None of the participants had knowledge of any CSA's, food co-ops, or community gardens.

According to the At-Risk Survey, fewer Hispanic/Latinos benefit from home-grown produce than other groups in the county. Six percent of Hispanic/Latino survey respondents (as compared to 7% of all respondents) reported getting some free produce from their own or others' gardening efforts at least once a month during growing season, and 86% of Hispanic/Latino residents report receiving no home-grown produce at all (compared to 79% of all respondents.) Two Spanish-language focus group participants grow food in personal gardens, but none reported getting food from a family member or friend's garden.

*Accessibility of safe, nutritious food:* Hispanic/Latinos appear to vary significantly to other at-risk groups as regards food accessibility. Fewer Hispanic/Latinos in Passaic County appear to own cars, and rely more heavily on neighborhood stores and bodegas. While a majority (63%) of Hispanic/Latino respondents to the at-risk survey either drive themselves (40%) or arrange for someone else to drive them (23%) to get food, this is lower than the 73% of all at-risk



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respondents who do so. Twenty-one percent of Hispanic/Latino respondents usually get their food by either walking or riding a bicycle to get food, as opposed to 14% of all respondents. When Spanish-language focus group members were asked why they use the stores that they do, they stated most often that they were unable to go to other stores due to transportation issues. None of the participants reported driving their own car to get to the grocery store, although some reported using one owned by a friend or family member. Some reported paying neighbors or friends to drive them to get groceries. Seven focus group participants have their food delivered.

*Affordability of safe, nutritious food:* The Hispanic/Latino focus group participants reported low income as their primary cause of food insecurity. One participant is a single mother with four male family members who work in construction. In her situation, she is unable to work full time because of her children and her family receives significantly less income in the winter months. Several participants stated that they were in similar situations and that in the winter it becomes very difficult to make ends meet. All of the participants in this particular focus group were parents and so issues relating to affordable, safe childcare, the cost of infant supplies, and other costs associated with raising children were discussed. Participants stated that because of the unavailability of safe, affordable child care, in many cases only one parent could work at a time. One person stated “If you’re a single mother, when you work, you work to pay the babysitter.”

There was also a general consensus that purchasing food becomes more difficult at the end of the month when SNAP assistance (food stamps) run out. Like the African-American focus group, they brought up difficulties arising from the income cut-off for SNAP assistance. One participant said (translated from Spanish,) “I am a single mother and my children’s father doesn’t pay his child support. We got a letter to prove that he didn’t give me any money, but they (food stamps) still count the income from the child support.”

### **Maps: SEE APPENDIX A**

- With municipal boundaries, Hispanic/Latino population, income, WIC/Food stamp usage



# PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

## Part Two, Section C. Ethnic Minorities: Native Americans

### 1. Group Characteristics

The Ramapough Mountain People are an extended clan of closely interrelated families living in the Ramapo Mountains and their more remote valleys principally in Bergen County, New Jersey, but also in immediately adjacent Passaic County, New Jersey, and Rockland County, New York. Their isolation has resulted in a high degree of intermarriage among the families. While they claim descent from the Iroquois and Algonquin nations and are recognized by the State of New Jersey as an Indian tribe<sup>26</sup>, their bloodlines also contain elements that are African, Dutch, and possibly German (Hessian) and Italian. In the 1980s, they petitioned the Bureau of Indian Affairs for recognition as a bona fide Indian tribe, with support from the state attorneys general of New York and New Jersey. Their efforts have so far been unsuccessful; the BIA has conceded that the Ramapough are Native Americans, but assert that the tribe provided no evidence of descent from the aboriginal Lenape Indians.<sup>27</sup> As a result, the Ramapough are not eligible for much needed government benefits, such as federal grants and governmental immunities.

Because of this racial mixing, it is not known how many of the Ramapough self-identify as Native American on the US Census. However, according to the census, there are 3,348 individuals who self-identify as Native American living in Passaic County. Our research indicates that of those 3,348 individuals, approximately 2,076 (At-Risk Survey estimates) – **nearly two thirds – are demonstrating behaviors consistent with some degree of food insecurity.**

### 2. Severity of Food Insecurity for Native Americans

**According to usage of food insecurity coping mechanisms as measured by the At-Risk Survey, Native Americans appear to be experiencing food insecurity at a significantly higher rate than at-risk survey respondents from the county as a whole. In addition, food insecurity appears to be much more severe among Native Americans than among respondents from the county as a whole.**

- 16 (76%) Native American respondents to the at-risk survey demonstrated some degree of food insecurity as measured by use of coping mechanisms as compared to 66% of all respondents,
- 6 (29%) Native American respondents to the at-risk survey cited use of one to three food insecurity coping mechanisms (less severe food insecurity.) This is 23% lower than the rate for all respondents (52%),
- 10 (48%) of the Native American at-risk survey respondents cited use of four to six food insecurity coping mechanisms (more severe food insecurity) which is 33% higher than the 15% for all respondents,

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<sup>26</sup> Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 3031, State of New Jersey, filed January 8, 1980.

<sup>27</sup> [Summary Under the Criteria and Evidence for Final Determination against Federal Acknowledgment of the Ramapough Mountain Indians, Inc.](#) Criterion 83.7(e)



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- 7 (33%) of the Native American at-risk survey respondents reported skipping meals because there wasn't enough food. (more severe food insecurity.) This is 20% higher than the rate for all respondents (13%), and
- in addition, 62% of the Native American-American at-risk survey respondents answered affirmatively that it is harder for them to get enough food this year when compared to a year ago. This is 27% higher than the rate for all respondents from the county as a whole (35%).

### **3. Primary Issues of Food Security for Native Americans:**

Native Americans in Passaic County, most of whom live up-county, face some unique challenges. The environmental situation in upper Ringwood, where many of them live, has exacerbated food insecurity among the Ramapough because the food that they grow has been contaminated by toxic chemical pollutants. Communities and businesses in the area are scattered and there is little public transportation, making it difficult for those without personal means of transportation to access food or employment. The area's status as a protected watershed prevents the development of new businesses which would provide local jobs. Another factor which may exacerbate food insecurity among local Native Americans is pride. A Ramapough key informant stated that "They (the Ramapough) have a lot of pride. Sometimes you really don't know what is happening within families because of the shame involved." Another stated that "Upper Ringwood (where many of the Ramapough live) has always been a struggling area because of the political structure," although she did not elaborate. But the community is close-knit and supportive of one another. The same key informant stated, "I will say this about my community because I find it very unique: we as a whole do try to help one another. We make meals for each other."

*Availability of safe, nutritious food:* There appears to be a sufficient amount of food available in the areas in which most Native Americans live. Eighty-six percent of Native American at-risk survey respondents (compared to 73% of all respondents) get their food from major chain supermarkets, with 14% reporting getting food from warehouse stores or superstores (compared to 17% of all respondents) and another 14% from community or government programs (compared to 13% of all respondents). The Native American at-risk survey respondents are satisfied with their primary food outlets; 14% of them would get their food from somewhere else if they could (compared to 37% of all respondents.) But many of them have chronic health conditions, and find it difficult to get the kinds of food they need to stay healthy. One Ramapough key informant focus group participant stated that her husband is a diabetic and as such has specific dietary needs. Although she did not elaborate, other focus groups have pointed out the difficulty of finding enough affordable food for people with dietary needs and health conditions under certain government programs, food stamps being the exception.

According to the At-Risk Survey, many more Native Americans benefit from home-grown produce than other groups in the county. Only 50% of Native American residents report receiving no home-grown produce at all (compared to 79% of all respondents). Eleven percent of Native American at-risk survey respondents (as compared to 7% of all respondents) reported



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getting free produce from their own or others' gardening efforts at least once a month during growing season, and another 17% reported receiving home-grown produce once or twice a week.

However, focus group information reveals that much of the up-county land occupied by the Ramapough is contaminated with heavy metals and ground pollution, and they have been advised not to eat food grown in that soil. As evidenced by the survey responses, many of them, facing very high levels of food insecurity, do so anyway. One key informant stated that there are inexpensive and safe ways of removing such pollution through a combination of growing certain types of plants and allowing land to lie fallow, called phyto-remediation. For example, growing mustard removes lead, and other plants remove cadmium and mercury. This merits further study to help improve the safety of food grown by the Ramapough, as well as in community gardens throughout Passaic County.

*Accessibility of safe, nutritious food:* It appears that access to food is a major issue among this population. As noted in the section on up-county, food outlets are scattered in the mountainous area in which most Native Americans live. Ninety-one percent of Native American respondents to the at-risk survey get their food by private vehicle, either driving themselves (62%) or arranging for someone else to drive them (29%). This is a significantly higher percentage than the 73% of all respondents who do so. None of the Native American respondents walk or ride a bicycle to get food, in contrast to 14% of all respondents. One key informant focus group participant stated that upper Ringwood (which has a high concentration of Native Americans) has no public transportation, although there is a bus that serves West Milford.

*Affordability of safe, nutritious food:* Although access to food is an issue, the primary problems for Native Americans in Passaic County are issues of affordability. Unemployment was cited as a major problem in the area. One key informant stated that "there is no transportation and everything is really spread out. You're driving forty miles to get unemployment at four dollars a gallon for gas. Jobs aren't hiring. People have really long commutes because of the job market." Focus group participants also discussed the increased cost of food, with one key informant remarking that "there has been a marked increase in the last five months, not just the last five years." Again referring to the transportation issue, a Ramapough informant stated that people pay their neighbors to take them to the store, which in turn adds to the cost of feeding the household. One Ramapough key informant stated that she received food stamps, which helped assuage her family's food insecurity.

### **5. Maps: SEE APPENDIX A**

- Municipal boundaries, Native American population, income, transit access



# PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

## PART THREE: FOOD INSECURITY BY OTHER AT-RISK GROUP



# PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

## Part Three, Section A: Other Risk Factors: Unemployed and Underemployed Individuals

### 1. Group Characteristics

Low income individuals are considered to be at risk of food insecurity according to USDA information. In addition, the United Way and CUMAC's experience in Passaic County have also identified the unemployed and low-wage workers to be at risk groups. This group was measured with the at-risk survey respondents who identified themselves as either not having a job, but trying to get one; having a job working 25 hours a week or less; or having a job earning \$10/hour or less. According to the 2010 United States Census, there are 27,906 unemployed individuals seeking work in Passaic County (no figures are available for the under-employed.) According to our at-risk survey estimates, 13,116 of them are experiencing some degree of food insecurity.

### 2. Severity of Food Insecurity for Unemployed and Underemployed Individuals

**According to usage of food insecurity coping mechanisms as measured by the At-Risk Survey, unemployed and underemployed individuals appear to be experiencing food insecurity at a slightly higher rate than at-risk survey respondents from the county as a whole. In addition, food insecurity appears to be more severe among unemployed and underemployed individuals than among respondents from the county as a whole.**

- 231 (74%) unemployed and underemployed respondents to the at-risk survey demonstrated some degree of food insecurity as measured by use of coping mechanisms as compared to 66% of all respondents.
- 166 (53%) unemployed and underemployed respondents to the at-risk survey cited use of one to three food insecurity coping mechanisms (less severe food insecurity.) This is 1% higher than the rate for all respondents (52%).
- 65 (21%) of the unemployed and underemployed at-risk survey respondents cited use of four to six food insecurity coping mechanisms (more severe food insecurity) which is 6% higher than the 15% for all respondents.
- 61 (20%) of the unemployed and underemployed at-risk survey respondents reported skipping meals because there wasn't enough food. (more severe food insecurity.) This is 7% higher than the rate for all respondents (13%).
- In addition, 37% of the unemployed and underemployed at-risk survey respondents answered affirmatively that it is harder for them to get enough food this year when compared to a year ago. This is 2% higher than the rate for all respondents from the county as a whole (35%).

### 3. Primary Issues of Food Security for Unemployed and Underemployed Individuals

Due to the economic downturn, the number of people who are unemployed or underemployed has increased significantly in recent years. According to the responses among our key-informant focus groups, the supply provided by community and government organizations has been unable to keep up with the resulting increased demand for food services. One key informant stated that "We have seen changes in the demographics of people coming to the food pantry. In the last three years, due to the economic downturn, food pantries are seeing a growth in first-time users coming in from the suburbs due to unemployment." Another barrier facing the unemployed or underemployed is a lack of knowledge as to the programs available to



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them. As one key informant put it, “If they have never been in the system they don’t know how to work the system, they don’t even know that there are services there to ask for.”

*Availability of safe, nutritious food:* Unemployed and underemployed individuals appear to vary slightly from other at-risk groups as regards where they get their food, and are more likely to get food from community and government programs. Sixty-seven percent of unemployed and underemployed at-risk survey respondents (compared to 73% of all respondents) get their food from major chain supermarkets with 13% reporting getting food from warehouse stores or superstores (compared to 17% of all respondents) and 18% from community or government programs (compared to 13% of all respondents). Key informant focus group members mentioned a surge in young adults coming to food pantries. They are finding it difficult to get even entry-level or minimum-wage work because people with families and years of work experience are competing for those same positions.

According to the At-Risk Survey, unemployed and underemployed individuals benefit from home-grown produce at a slightly lower rate compared to all respondents in the county. Eighty-three percent of unemployed and underemployed individuals report receiving no home-grown produce at all (compared to 79% of all respondents). Five percent of unemployed and underemployed individual survey respondents (as compared to 7% of all respondents) reported getting some free produce from their own or others’ gardening efforts at least once a month during growing season.

*Accessibility of safe, nutritious food:* It appears that fewer of the unemployed and underemployed at-risk survey respondents own a car than other survey respondents. Fewer of them obtain their food by car, with 64% of respondents to the at-risk survey either driving themselves or arranging for someone else to drive them as compared to 73% of all respondents. Twenty-two percent walk or ride a bicycle to get their food, compared to 14% of all respondents. Not surprisingly, unemployed and underemployed individuals appear to take advantage more of the proximity of neighborhood grocery stores to get most of their food (24%) than do all respondents (17%). Thirty-six percent of the unemployed and underemployed at-risk survey respondents would get their food from somewhere else if they could (almost the same percentage as the 37% of all respondents.)

One up-county key informant focus group participant commented on the impact of transportation issues on the unemployed. She said “you are driving forty miles to get unemployment at \$4.00 a gallon for gas, and jobs aren’t hiring.” Transportation issues make it difficult for the unemployed without personal vehicles to not only obtain groceries, but also to apply for benefits, visit food pantries, or seek employment.

*Affordability of safe, nutritious food:* As one at-risk participant put it, “no job and no resources are the same thing.” With the high cost or outright unavailability of transportation coupled with the increased cost of food, people with limited means as a result of unemployment are automatically at risk of food insecurity. Often those receiving unemployment checks do not meet the income qualifications for programs such as SNAP, although food stamps were rated highly effective by focus group participants for those who qualify. Supplemental food programs like



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WIC seem to be helpful for unemployed parents with children under the age of five, but are not available to other families or individuals. Many people in this situation are taking turning to community programs like food pantries, many for the first time.

### **5. Maps: SEE APPENDIX A**

- With municipal boundaries, unemployment, income, WIC/food stamp utilization



# PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

## Part Three, Section B. Other Risk Factors: Disabled Individuals

### **1. Group Characteristics**

United Way and CUMAC's experience in Passaic County suggests that the disabled are at-risk of food insecurity. The USDA does not measure food insecurity among the disabled. According to the 2010 United States Census, Passaic County is home to 49,123 individuals who self-identify as disabled. Of those, the at-risk survey responses indicate that approximately 23,088 of them are experiencing some degree of food insecurity.

### **2. Severity of Food Insecurity for Disabled Individuals**

**According to usage of food insecurity coping mechanisms as measured by the At-Risk Survey, respondents who self-identified themselves as disabled appear to be experiencing food insecurity at a higher rate than at-risk survey respondents from the county as a whole. In addition, food insecurity appears to be more severe among disabled individuals than among respondents from the county as a whole.**

- 67 (73%) disabled respondents to the at-risk survey demonstrated some degree of food insecurity as measured by use of coping mechanisms as compared to 66% of all respondents.
- 46 (50%) disabled respondents to the at-risk survey cited use of one to three food insecurity coping mechanisms (less severe food insecurity.) This is 2% lower than the rate for all respondents (52%).
- 21 (23%) of the disabled at-risk survey respondents cited use of four to six food insecurity coping mechanisms (more severe food insecurity) which is 8% higher than the 15% for all respondents.
- 19 (21%) of the disabled at-risk survey respondents reported skipping meals because there wasn't enough food. (more severe food insecurity.) This is 8% higher than the rate for all respondents (13%).
- In addition, 40% of the disabled at-risk survey respondents answered affirmatively that it is harder for them to get enough food this year when compared to a year ago. This is 5% higher than the rate for all respondents from the county as a whole (35%).

### **3. Primary Issues of Food Security for Disabled Individuals**

Food insecurity is a major problem for disabled individuals who are unable to transport themselves, as well as those with dietary restrictions and chronic diseases. Diabetics and those with food allergies cannot be provided Meals on Wheels and need specific types of foods, some of which are more expensive and less readily available. Addiction and mental illness appear to be exacerbated by food insecurity: a key informant focus group member hypothesized that the depression and anxiety which accompanies food insecurity leads to drug and alcohol addictions, which in turn exacerbate the problem.

*Availability of safe, nutritious food:* Disabled respondents appear to vary from other at-risk respondents as regards where they get their food. Seventy-eight percent of disabled at-risk survey respondents (compared to 73% of all respondents) get their food from major chain supermarkets with 16% reporting getting food from warehouse stores or superstores (compared to



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17% of all respondents) and 21% from community or government programs (compared to 13% of all respondents).

According to the At-Risk Survey, disabled respondents benefit from home-grown produce at a higher rate compared to all respondents in the county. Ten percent of disabled survey respondents (as compared to 7% of all respondents) reported getting some free produce from their own or others' gardening efforts at least once a month during growing season. Seventy-seven percent of disabled report receiving no home-grown produce at all (compared to 79% of all respondents).

*Accessibility of safe, nutritious food:* Accessibility was cited by focus group respondents as a major barrier to food security for the disabled. As one key informant focus group member pointed out, illnesses prevent some people from even being able to carry their groceries, so there are logistical barriers. One disabled elderly woman participating in an at-risk focus group mentioned that she was unable to drive herself to the grocery store, and because she needs a power chair, family members cannot drive her either. She grocery shops once a week using transportation provided by the senior center, but expressed concern about those without access to those types of programs. Even the physically healthy may have serious difficulty accessing food if they have persistent or severe mental illness. A key informant who works with the mentally ill stated that if she could do one thing to aid in food insecurity it would be to provide transportation to all who require it.

Disabled respondents appear to utilize nearby neighborhood grocery stores at the same rate as all respondents (17%). Fewer of the disabled use a private vehicle to get their food: 38% of disabled respondents to the at-risk survey drive themselves (compared to 51% of all respondents,) 26% arrange for someone else to drive them (compared to 22% of all respondents,) 17% walk or ride a bicycle (compared to 14% of all respondents,) and 11% rely on a bus or a van to get their food (compared to 8% of all respondents.) Six percent of the disabled reported having food delivered to them. Forty-six percent of the disabled at-risk survey respondents would get their food from somewhere else if they could (compared to the 37% for all respondents.)

*Affordability of safe, nutritious food:* According to focus group participants, another major barrier to food security for the disabled is the cost of healthcare. One participant stated that her children's prescriptions total over \$500 a month after insurance, and another has a teenaged daughter who requires injections which Medicaid will not cover. Another woman spoke of her diabetic grandson who cannot afford his insulin injections. The income cap for SNAP assistance is a major barrier. One woman stated that "even when my husband was sick and we needed just a little bit of help they told me I would have to quit my job to get food stamps before we could get anything". She went on to say that as a result she now has to take advantage of community food programs to get enough food for her household.

### 5. Maps: SEE APPENDIX A

- With municipal boundaries, show disabled population, income, people receiving SSI



# PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

## Part Three, Section C. Other Risk Factors: Recent Immigrants

### **1. Group Characteristics**

The United Way and CUMAC's experience in Passaic County identified recent immigrants to be at risk for food insecurity. This group was measured with the at-risk survey respondents who identified themselves as either living in the United States less than five years or speaking a language other than English most of the time.

### **2. Severity of Food Insecurity for Recent Immigrants**

**According to usage of food insecurity coping mechanisms as measured by the At-Risk Survey, recent immigrants appear to be experiencing food insecurity at about the same rate of at-risk survey respondents from the county as a whole. Food insecurity appears to be slightly more severe among recent immigrant individuals than among respondents from the county as a whole.**

- 188 (66%) recent immigrant respondents to the at-risk survey demonstrated some degree of food insecurity as measured by use of coping mechanisms, equal to the rate of all respondents.
- 143 (51%) recent immigrant respondents to the at-risk survey cited use of one to three food insecurity coping mechanisms (less severe food insecurity.) This is 1% lower than the rate for all respondents (52%.)
- 45 (16%) of the recent immigrant at-risk survey respondents cited use of four to six food insecurity coping mechanisms (more severe food insecurity) which is 1% higher than the 15% for all respondents.
- 43 (17%) of the recent immigrant at-risk survey respondents reported skipping meals because there wasn't enough food. (more severe food insecurity.) This is 4% higher than the rate for all respondents (13%).
- In addition, 37% of the recent immigrant at-risk survey respondents answered affirmatively that it is harder for them to get enough food this year when compared to a year ago. This is 2% higher than the rate for all respondents from the county as a whole (35%).

### **3. Primary Issues of Food Security for Recent Immigrants**

At-risk focus groups of non-English speakers did not address the topic of immigration status, although it was discussed at length in key informant focus groups, suggesting hesitancy among non-English speakers to bring up the subject. The following focus group information was taken from the responses of an at-risk focus group of non-English speakers, as well as responses from all key informant focus groups.

*Availability of safe, nutritious food:* Recent immigrants appear to vary from other at-risk respondents as regards where they get their food. Sixty-nine percent of recent immigrant at-risk survey respondents (compared to 73% of all respondents) get their food from major chain supermarkets with 23% reporting getting food from warehouse stores or superstores (compared to 17% of all respondents) and another 13% from community or government programs (the same rate as all respondents). Recent immigrants appear to take advantage of the proximity of neighborhood grocery stores to get most of their food (17%) at the same rate as all respondents



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(17%). Interestingly, 13% of the recent immigrants report getting their food from upscale or health food markets compared with 8% of all respondents with 11% of the recent immigrants getting food from specialty food stores compared with 6% all respondents. This may be due to a search for foods that fulfill religious requirements, or for particular ethnic foods.

According to the At-Risk Survey, recent immigrants benefit from home-grown produce at a slightly lower rate compared to all respondents in the county. Eighty-two percent of recent immigrants report receiving no home-grown produce at all (compared to 79% of all respondents). Six percent of recent immigrant survey respondents (as compared to 7% of all respondents) reported getting some free produce from their own or others' gardening efforts at least once a month during growing season. This may be due in part to a concentration of recent immigrants in urban areas.

*Accessibility of safe, nutritious food:* The majority of recent immigrant respondents to the at-risk survey (69%) either drive themselves (49%) or arrange for someone else to drive them (20%) to get food, compared with 73% of all respondents who do so. Eighteen percent walk or ride a bicycle to get their food, compared to 14% of all at-risk respondents. None of the at-risk focus group participants reported driving their own car to get to the grocery store. Seven participants have their food delivered. Most responded that they take the bus, walk, or get a ride from a friend or relative. Forty-two percent of the recent immigrant at-risk survey respondents would get their food from somewhere else if they could (compared to the 37% for all respondents.)

*Affordability of safe, nutritious food:* Key informants reported a high rate of recent and undocumented immigrants utilizing government or community programs to get enough food for their households. One key informant stated that there is a lack of education about how these programs work, and that people often don't take advantage of programs that they could qualify for because of the fear of deportation. According to key-informants, children often qualify even if the adults don't. Also, the undocumented cannot always apply for assistance even in community or religious programs because they need to provide a social security number for income verification, which the programs have to report to the food bank. There is an underutilization of resources. To quote one key-informant, "There is a lack of knowledge about what is available. The difficulty of getting assistance, too many hoops to jump through, dietary restrictions such as Halal...also, there are language barriers and religious restrictions that make finding adequate food more difficult, and those who have medical restrictions such as diabetes. Another key-informant said, "They need to find the foods they are most familiar and comfortable with and also that meet certain dietary restrictions. Sometimes the expense of these foods can become an issue."

### **5. Maps: SEE APPENDIX A**

- With municipal boundaries, show recent immigrant population, non-English speakers, income.



# PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

## Part Three, Section D. Other Risk Factors: Single Parents

### **1. Group Characteristics**

According to USDA research, single parents with children living at home under the age of 18 have some of the highest rates of food insecurity in the nation.<sup>28</sup> The 2010 United States Census reports that there are 19,423 Passaic County households with children under 18 headed by a single parent. Of those, between 3,302 (USDA figures) and 7,769 (At-Risk Survey figures) are estimated to be experiencing some degree of food insecurity. Eighty-two percent of Key Informant Survey respondents considered members of this group to be somewhat (49%) or very (33%) likely to experience food insecurity.

### **2. Severity of Food Insecurity for Single Parents**

**According to usage of food insecurity coping mechanisms as measured by the At-Risk Survey, single parents appear to be experiencing food insecurity at rates similar to those of at-risk survey respondents from the county as a whole. However, food insecurity appears to be more severe among single parents than among respondents from the county as a whole.**

- 166 (65%) single parent respondents to the at-risk survey demonstrated some degree of food insecurity as measured by use of coping mechanisms as compared to 66% of all respondents.
- 121 (47%) single parent respondents to the at-risk survey cited use of one to three food insecurity coping mechanisms (less severe food insecurity.) This is 5% lower than the rate for all respondents (52%.)
- 45 (18%) of the single parents at-risk survey respondents cited use of four to six food insecurity coping mechanisms (more severe food insecurity) which is 3% higher than the 15% for all respondents.
- 40 (16%) of the single parents at-risk survey respondents reported skipping meals because there wasn't enough food. (more severe food insecurity.) This is 3% higher than the rate for all respondents (13%).
- In addition, 29% of the single parent at-risk survey respondents answered affirmatively that it is harder for them to get enough food this year when compared to a year ago. This is 6% lower than the rate for all respondents (35%).

### **3. Primary Issues of Food Security for Single Parents**

*Availability of safe, nutritious food:* While food is readily available to Passaic County single parents, it is sometimes difficult for those parents to make healthy food choices. Some key informants spoke about parents relying on unhealthy convenience foods to feed their families because they do not have time to cook. One person stated, “A single mom has limited time, she is sometimes working two jobs, and she has limited money. It all goes to convenience.”

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<sup>28</sup> Nord, Mark, Alisha Coleman-Jensen, Margaret Andrews, and Steven Carlson. *Household Food Security in the United States, 2009*. ERR-108, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Econ. Res. Serv. November 2010.



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Single parents are more likely than other at-risk groups to get food from government or community programs, with 16% of single parent at-risk survey respondents reporting getting food from community or government programs, compared to 13% of all respondents. Seventy-one percent (compared to 73% of all respondents) get their food from major chain supermarkets with 16% reporting getting food from warehouse stores or superstores (compared to 17% of all respondents.) According to the At-Risk Survey, single parents benefit from home-grown produce at a slightly lower rate than other respondents. Eighty-two percent of single parent survey respondents report receiving no home-grown produce at all (compared to 79% of all respondents).

Seven percent of single parent survey respondents (the same as all respondents) reported getting some free produce from their own or others' gardening efforts at least once a month during growing season.

*Accessibility of safe, nutritious food:* Some single parents in at-risk focus groups spoke about difficulty accessing transportation and a lack of reliable or convenient public transportation in parts of Passaic County, but the group did not seem much more or less affected by lack of transportation than other groups were. One mother said that her child's stroller allows her to put her groceries in the bottom when she walks to the store,

Single parents appear to take advantage more of the proximity of neighborhood grocery stores to get most of their food (22%) than do all respondents (17%), with 19% walking or riding a bicycle to get food (compared to 14% of all respondents.) However, 70% of single parents obtain most of their food by car, either driving themselves (44%) or arranging for someone else to drive them (26%), compared to the 73% of all respondents who do so. In addition, 3% of the single parents primarily rely on cabs to get their food with 1% having food delivered to their home. At-risk focus group parents spoke of the difficulty of grocery shopping with small children and of transporting children to and from the store in inclement weather. Thirty-nine percent of the single parent at-risk survey respondents would get their food from somewhere else if they could (compared to the 37% for all respondents.)

*Affordability of safe, nutritious food:* The affordability of safe, nutritious food appears to be by far the greatest barrier facing single parents. A major concern appears to be the lack of safe, reliable and affordable childcare. Several participants, both key informants and at-risk groups, spoke at length about the difficulty of being able to work and pay for child care, living expenses and food. One mother stated that as a single parent, "if you work, you work to pay the babysitter." Even parents who were still in couples mentioned it being very difficult to make ends meet, because only one parent could work at a time due to the high cost of childcare. The cost of other necessities such as diapers is another major issue, especially since these things are not usually covered by government programs. A key informant stated that "our biggest problems are with single parents. We get them formula but our big issue is the expense of pampers."

One key informant mentioned that their non-profit has seen a marked increase of need in this population. Like other low-income individuals, single parents also sometimes have greater difficulty gaining access to government aid because of SNAP income requirements. One mother stated that "my children's father doesn't pay his child support. We got a letter to prove that the



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father didn't give me any money, but they still count the income from the child support." Single parents rated WIC as the government program which works the best for them, but only for those with children under five.

### 5. Maps: SEE APPENDIX A

- With municipal boundaries, show single parent households, free and reduced price lunch usage, WIC/TANF utilization



# PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

## Part Three, Section F. Other Risk Factors: Adults Living Alone

### **1. Group Characteristics**

Adults living alone are considered by USDA to be at-risk of food insecurity. According to the 2010 United States Census, Passaic County is home to 37,706 adults living alone. Of those, between 2,639 (USDA estimate) and 10,935 (At-Risk Survey estimate) are experiencing some degree of food insecurity.

### **2. Severity of Food Insecurity for Adults Living Alone**

**According to usage of food insecurity coping mechanisms as measured by the At-Risk Survey, adults living alone appear to be experiencing food insecurity at a lower rate than at-risk survey respondents from the county as a whole. In addition, food insecurity appears to be less severe among adults living alone than among respondents from the county as a whole.**

- 143 (64%) of adults living alone responding to the at-risk survey demonstrated some degree of food insecurity as measured by use of coping mechanisms as compared to 66% of all respondents.
- 124 (55%) of adults living alone responding to the at-risk survey cited use of one to three food insecurity coping mechanisms (less severe food insecurity). This is 3% higher than the rate for all respondents (52%).
- 19 (8%) of adults living alone responding to the at-risk survey cited use of four to six food insecurity coping mechanisms (more severe food insecurity) which is 7% lower than the 15% for all respondents.
- 27 (12%) of the adults living alone at-risk survey respondents reported skipping meals because there wasn't enough food. (more severe food insecurity.) This is 1% lower than the rate for all respondents (13%).
- In addition, 31% of the adults living alone at-risk survey respondents answered affirmatively that it is harder for them to get enough food this year when compared to a year ago. This is 4% lower than the rate for all respondents (35%).

### **3. Primary Issues of Food Security for Adults living alone Individuals**

There is a lower risk of food insecurity among adults living alone than was expected, both from survey data and focus group information. Of an at-risk focus group of seniors, even the elderly living alone who took advantage of certain programs claimed to be utilizing the services primarily to combat isolation, not because of food insecurity. When asked why they came to the senior center, one man stated that “I’m an old man and I’m the only one at home. I have nothing to do so I come down here and they feed me and I get to get out of the house and talk to people”. A woman from the same group said “I am an old maid who lives alone with her cat, and I get out here and I forget all my cares and worries.” Another person said “I think most of us are alone at home and I met more people here than I have met in years and I enjoy it”. There were several such comments. Adults living alone who are experiencing greater food insecurity may also have other risk factors such as advanced age with frailty or disability. Further data examination is suggested.



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*Availability of safe, nutritious food:* There appears to be sufficient availability of safe, nutritious food for most of this population. Adults living alone appear to vary from other at-risk respondents as regards where they get their food. (Results for adults over the age of 65 living alone were not separated from those of younger respondents.) Fewer get their food from major chain supermarkets, and more get food from community or government programs. Sixty-nine percent of adult survey respondents living alone (compared to 73% of all respondents) get their food from major chain supermarkets with 13% reporting getting food from warehouse stores or superstores (compared to 17% of all respondents) and 17% from community or government programs (compared to 13% of all respondents). Adult respondents living alone appear to take more advantage (21%) of the proximity of neighborhood grocery stores to get most of their food than all respondents (17%). Only 30% of the adults living alone at-risk survey respondents would get their food from somewhere else if they could (compared to the 37% for all respondents), which is an indication of satisfaction with their usual food sources.

According to the At-Risk Survey, adults living alone benefit from home-grown produce at a slightly lower rate than all respondents in the county. Eighty-four percent of adults living alone report receiving no home-grown produce at all (compared to 79% of all respondents). Seven percent of adults living alone survey respondents (equal to 7% of all respondents) reported getting some free produce from their own or others' gardening efforts at least once a month during growing season.

*Accessibility of safe, nutritious food:* Among adults living alone responding to the at-risk survey, 63% of respondents either drive themselves to get food (40%) or arrange for someone else to drive them (23%.) Seventeen percent walk or ride a bicycle, 14% rely on a bus or a van to get their food, and 7% report having food delivered to them. This is in contrast to all survey respondents, of whom 73% drive or have another person drive them, 14% walk or ride a bicycle, 8% take a bus or van, and 4% have food delivered.

*Affordability of safe, nutritious food:* There were no specific comments made in focus groups specifically concerning the affordability of food for adults living alone.

### **5. Maps: SEE APPENDIX A**

- With municipal boundaries, show adults living alone population, elderly, disabled.



# PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

## Part Three, Section F. Other Risk Factors: Elderly Individuals

### 1. Group Characteristics

United Way and CUMAC's experience in Passaic County indicates that the elderly (individuals age 65 and over) are at-risk of food insecurity. However, USDA research shows the elderly to be at lower risk of food insecurity than other segments of the population. This research attempts to clarify the prevalence of food insecurity among the elderly in Passaic County. According to the 2010 United States Census, Passaic County is home to 60,324 individuals aged 65 years and over. According to behaviors measured by the At-Risk Survey, of those 60,324 individuals, approximately 11,462 are experiencing some degree of food insecurity. This is the lowest rate of any at-risk group measured.

### 2. Severity of Food Insecurity for Elderly Individuals

**According to usage of food insecurity coping mechanisms as measured by the At-Risk Survey, respondents who self-identified themselves as elderly appear to be experiencing food insecurity at a significantly lower rate than at-risk survey respondents from the county as a whole. In addition, food insecurity appears to be less severe among elderly individuals than among respondents from the county as a whole.**

- 76 (50%) elderly respondents to the at-risk survey demonstrated some degree of food insecurity as measured by use of coping mechanisms as compared to 66% of all respondents.
- 67 (44%) elderly respondents to the at-risk survey cited use of one to three food insecurity coping mechanisms (less severe food insecurity.) This is 8% lower than the rate for all respondents (52%).
- 9 (6%) of the elderly at-risk survey respondents cited use of four to six food insecurity coping mechanisms (more severe food insecurity) which is 9% lower than the 15% for all respondents.
- 6 (4%) of the elderly at-risk survey respondents reported skipping meals because there wasn't enough food. (more severe food insecurity.) This is 9% lower than the rate for all respondents (13%).
- In addition, 27% of the elderly at-risk survey respondents answered affirmatively that it is harder for them to get enough food this year when compared to a year ago. This is 8% lower than the rate for all respondents from the county as a whole (35%).

### 3. Primary Issues of Food Security for Elderly Individuals

The evidence suggests that most of the elderly in Passaic County have a reasonable degree of food security. They may enjoy a certain degree of protection from food affordability issues because of Social Security and Medicare, and from social services such as Meals on Wheels. However, there are still a significant number of them facing food insecurity. For them, the issues appear to be more related to infirmity or isolation than age itself.

*Availability of safe, nutritious food:* Most elderly focus group respondents believe that there is enough safe, nutritious food available to them. Elderly respondents to the at-risk survey appear to vary from other respondents as regards where they get their food. Eighty-four percent of elderly at-risk survey respondents (compared to 73% of all respondents) get their food from



## PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

major chain supermarkets with 15% reporting getting food from warehouse stores or superstores (compared to 17% of all respondents) and 7% from community or government programs (nearly half the 13% rate among all respondents). Only 22% of the elderly at-risk survey respondents would get their food from somewhere else if they could (compared to 37% for all respondents), which is an indication of satisfaction with their normal food outlets. Elderly focus group participants stated general satisfaction with the stores they used most, and reported using large grocery stores the majority of the time.

According to the At-Risk Survey, elderly respondents benefit from home-grown produce at slightly lower rate than all respondents in the county. Seven percent of elderly survey respondents (as compared to 7% of all respondents) reported getting some free produce from their own or others' gardening efforts at least once a month during growing season. Eighty-two percent of elderly report receiving no home-grown produce at all (compared to 79% of all respondents). When asked about their knowledge of alternative food sources, elderly focus group participants reported knowing of at least two farmers markets, but no community gardens or CSA's. Five of the focus group participants reported either growing their own food or receiving produce from a friend who grows food.

*Accessibility of safe, nutritious food:* Accessibility of food appears to be the primary challenge faced by the elderly. Elderly respondents appear to take less advantage (7%) of the proximity of neighborhood grocery stores to get most of their food than all respondents (17%). Of elderly respondents to the at-risk survey, 78% either drive themselves (48%) or arrange for someone else to drive them to get food (30%.) Four percent walk or ride a bicycle, 11% rely on a bus or van to get their food, and 7% have food delivered. By contrast, among all at-risk survey respondents, 51% drive themselves to get food, 22% have another person drive them, 14% walk or ride a bicycle, 8% take a bus or van and 4% have food delivered to them. Several elderly focus group participants are able to drive themselves to get food, while several more are driven by a family member. Three reported taking the bus, and none reported walking. One participant stated that the "senior center takes me shopping weekly. I can't drive myself because my disability requires a wheelchair."

Accessibility was the primary determining factor determining where and how elderly focus group participants obtained food. One participant discussed the difficulties of accessing grocery stores because she was confined to a power wheelchair and as such could not drive, take most public transportation or be driven by friends. A key informant also mentioned in a focus group that the elderly have a very difficult time accessing and using public transportation, which is especially problematic since so many of them are unable to drive themselves. Not all elderly qualify for Meals on Wheels, and those that do may have dietary needs such as diabetes which prevents them from being able to utilize the program. Transportation appears to be the biggest barrier for the elderly, whereas unemployment seems to be the biggest barrier for most groups.

*Affordability of safe, nutritious food:* Seniors were primarily concerned with the cost of medication and the inability to work due to declining health. One focus group participant stated that her daughter brings her flyers which display the prices of food so that they can plan what to buy in advance.



# PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

## 5. Maps: SEE APPENDIX A

- See map from prior section, Adults Living Alone.



# PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

## Part Three, Section G. Other Risk Factors: Special Report on Islamic Center

### **1. Group Characteristics**

Passaic County is home to a growing Muslim community which faces a set of challenges – religious, linguistic, and political – that differ from other recent immigrant groups. While the US Census does not track individuals by religion, New Jersey has been estimated to have the second largest Muslim population by percentage in the United States. The city of Paterson's Muslim population has been estimated at 25,000 to 30,000.<sup>29</sup> Paterson has been home to a Turkish-American community (Little Istanbul) since the 1950s, which is now the largest Turkish-American immigrant community in the United States and the second largest Arab-American community after Dearborn, Michigan.<sup>30</sup> Little Istanbul (also known as Little Ramallah) is an area of South Paterson centered around Main Street which is also home to many Palestinians, Lebanese, Syrians, and Jordanians. Reflective of these communities, Paterson and Prospect Park public schools observe Muslim holidays.

This section reports on food security as reported by the twenty-three respondents who completed the At-Risk Survey at the Paterson Islamic Center, as well as representatives of the Muslim community who attended focus group sessions.

### **2. Severity of Food Insecurity for Islamic Center**

According to usage of food insecurity coping mechanisms as measured by the At-Risk Survey, Islamic Center survey respondents appear to be experiencing food insecurity at a somewhat lower rate than at-risk survey respondents from the county as a whole. In addition, food insecurity appears to be less severe among Islamic Center individuals than among all respondents. This may be because the Islamic Center's constituency consists of a mixture of the well-established and the recently-arrived. Further study is suggested.

- 14 (61%) Islamic Center respondents to the at-risk survey demonstrated some degree of food insecurity as measured by use of coping mechanisms as compared to 66% of all respondents.
- 13 (57%) Islamic Center respondents to the at-risk survey cited use of one to three food insecurity coping mechanisms (less severe food insecurity). This is 6% higher than the rate for all respondents (52%).
- One (4%) of the Islamic Center at-risk survey respondents cited use of four to six food insecurity coping mechanisms (more severe food insecurity) which is 11% lower than the 15% for all respondents.
- 2 (9%) of the Islamic Center at-risk survey respondents reported skipping meals because there wasn't enough food. (more severe food insecurity). This is 4% lower than the rate for all respondents (13%).

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<sup>29</sup> Thomasch, Paul. "Irene another blow to struggling New Jersey city", *Reuters*, September 1, 2011. Accessed September 4, 2011.

<sup>30</sup> via Associated Press. "Muslims could prove key in choosing next U.S. president", *The Seattle Times*, October 8, 2004. Accessed July 17, 2011. "... Paterson, which is the nation's second-largest Arab-American community after the Dearborn, Mich.-area."



## PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

- In addition, 22% of the Islamic Center at-risk survey respondents answered affirmatively that it is harder for them to get enough food this year when compared to a year ago. This is 13% lower than the rate for all respondents from the county as a whole (35%).

### **3. Primary Issues of Food Security for Islamic Center Individuals**

*Availability of safe, nutritious food:* Food in general is readily available in Passaic County, but food that meets Islamic dietary requirements is considerably less available. Many people in Islamic communities have difficulty finding halal food. One Islamic Center key informant stated that his clients are willing to accept kosher food if halal is not available, but frequently kosher food is not available either, especially to those people who are utilizing community or government programs. If they cannot access the food to which their religion restricts them, many people do not eat.

Islamic Center respondents appear to vary from other at-risk respondents as regards where they get their food. Seventy percent of Islamic Center at-risk survey respondents (compared to 73% of all respondents) get their food from major chain supermarkets with 39% reporting getting food from warehouse stores or superstores (compared to 17% of all respondents) and none from community or government programs (compared to 13% of all respondents). Islamic Center respondents appear to take less advantage of the proximity of neighborhood grocery stores to get most of their food (9%) than all respondents (17%). Interestingly, 13% of the Islamic Center respondents get their food from upscale or health food markets compared with 8% of all respondents with 17% of the Islamic Center getting food from specialty food stores (compared with 6% all respondents) and an additional 13% eat out (compared to 6% for all respondents). This use of specialty and upscale markets may reflect a desire to acquire foods that meet Islamic dietary standards. Forty-three percent of the Islamic Center at-risk survey respondents would get their food from somewhere else if they could (compared to the 37% for all respondents.)

**Interestingly, Islamic Center at-risk survey respondents benefit from home-grown produce at a significantly higher rate than other survey respondents.** Nearly four times as many (26%) Islamic Center survey respondents reported getting some free produce from their own or others' gardening efforts at least once a month during growing season than all respondents (7%.) Only 68% of Islamic Center respondents report receiving no home-grown produce at all (compared to 79% of all respondents).

*Accessibility of safe, nutritious food:* More Islamic respondents to the at-risk survey either drive themselves (91%) or arrange for someone else to drive them (5%) to get food, with an additional 5% walking or riding a bicycle to get their food. It appears that significantly more of the Islamic Center respondents own a car than all survey respondents, of whom 51% reported that they drive to get food themselves, 22% have another person drive them and 14% walk or ride a bicycle.

*Affordability of safe, nutritious food:* The affordability of halal food is a major barrier for Islamic individuals. One Islamic Center key informant stated that they have begun giving gift baskets of halal foods to Islamic families, but they can only supply 200, which is far from meeting the demand. Key informants also commented on how expensive Halal meat is, and that there is no



## PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

way to verify that it is actually Halal. A participant noted that she felt “penalized for eating according to (her) faith practice.”

### **5. Maps: SEE APPENDIX A**

- With municipal boundaries, show religions, recent immigrants, English language learners.



# PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

## PART FOUR: CITY MUNICIPAL SNAPSHOTS



# PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

## PART ONE: FOOD INSECURITY BY LOCATION

### A. City of Passaic

#### 1. City of Passaic General Description

The densely populated urban center of Passaic is located in the southern section of Passaic County (the bottom of the hourglass shape) known as down-county.

#### 2. City of Passaic General Statistics

According to the 2010 United States Census, the population of the city of Passaic is 69,81631 which comprises 16% of the down-county population of 431,897 and 14 % of the total county population of 501,22632.

Specifically, the city of Passaic is home to:

- 4,368 households with children headed by a single parent
- 3,795 adults living alone
- 3,142 individuals aged 65 years and over
- 2,230 individuals who self-identify as African-American
- 13,422 individuals who self-identify as Hispanic or Latino (although those numbers could be up to 40% higher, based on estimates of the undocumented)
- 51 individuals who self-identify as Native American

(Note: 2010 census data not available at this level for recent immigrants, disabled or unemployed individuals.)

#### 3. Who is experiencing food insecurity in the city of Passaic?

Using the application of national and statewide USDA food security statistics on the city of Passaic, 4.4% of all Passaic city households can be expected to be experiencing low food security and 2.1% of Passaic households very low food security. This means that there are approximately 855 Passaic city households experiencing low food security and an additional 408 households experiencing very low food security. Therefore, food security is estimated to be a problem for approximately 1,263 Passaic city households. However, our at-risk survey information indicates that the number could be significantly higher.

The following table shows the estimated number (where available) and percent of individuals from these groups experiencing food insecurity in the city of Passaic based on two different methods of estimation: 1) by applying USDA food insecurity statistics for New Jersey onto the city of Passaic population; 2) by finding the percent of individuals in these groups who reported

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<sup>31</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010. American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate. Retrieved January 6, 2012 at <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

<sup>32</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010. American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate.



## PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

using two or more food insecurity coping mechanisms on our At-Risk Survey and applying that percentage to the population.

*Note that there were only two Key Informant survey respondents from city of Passaic; therefore the sample size is too small for reporting.*

City of Passaic At-risk Group	USDA statistical food insecurity estimate		Number of individuals est. food insecure using at-risk survey %	
	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	% of respond-ents
Single parents with children	743	17%	1,398	32%
Adults living alone	266	7%	1,556	41%
Elderly (over age 65)	n/a	n/a	1,320	42%
African-Americans	268	12%	1,405	63%
Hispanic/Latinos	2,013	15%	3,892	29%
Native American	n/a	n/a	17	33%

As in the county as a whole and in the down-county area, the at-risk survey group showed much higher rates of use of coping mechanisms for food insecurity than the USDA estimates for the state would indicate. Surprisingly, a much higher proportion of elderly at-risk respondents in the City of Passaic (42%) reported using coping mechanisms than did the elderly in Paterson (17%), the down-county area (17%), or the county as a whole (19%). Only the up-county elderly reported similar rates of food insecurity coping mechanism use (40%). Adults living alone also appear to be more food insecure in the City of Passaic than in other areas of the county, with the exception of the up-county area. More African-American and Native American at-risk survey respondents living in the City of Passaic reported using at least two coping mechanisms than did respondents from down-county as a whole. Single parents with children and Hispanic/Latino individuals, on the other hand, appear to enjoy slightly higher levels of food security in the City of Passaic than do similar groups living in other down-county areas.

#### 4. How severe is food insecurity in the city of Passaic?

Overall, food insecurity appears to be less severe in city of Passaic than in the rest of down-county or the county as a whole.

- 89 (50%) city of Passaic respondents to the at-risk survey cited use of one to three food insecurity coping mechanisms (less severe food insecurity), compared to 52% reported by both down-county and all respondents.
- 18 (10%) of the city of Passaic at-risk survey respondents cited use of four to six food insecurity coping mechanisms (more severe food insecurity), compared to 11% of the down-county respondents and 15% of respondents from the county as a whole.



## PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

- 12 (7%) of the city of Passaic at-risk survey respondents reported skipping meals because there wasn't enough food (more severe food insecurity) compared to 11% of down-county respondents and 13% of respondents from the county as a whole.
- In addition, 27% of the city of Passaic at-risk survey respondents report that it is harder for them to get enough food this year when compared to a year ago compared to 32% of the down-county at-risk survey respondents and 35% of respondents from the county as a whole.

### **5. What factors impact food security in City of Passaic?**

*Availability of safe, nutritious food:* Data suggests that there is a sufficient quantity of food within the City of Passaic to feed all its residents. However, at-risk focus group participants in the city of Passaic reported poor quality produce and goods sold past their expiration date, especially in smaller stores and bodegas. A larger percentage of Passaic City residents get their food from sources other than supermarkets than in down-county as a whole: 65% of at-risk survey respondents get their food from major chain supermarkets, compared to 71% in down-county as a whole. Twenty-seven percent of city of Passaic at-risk survey respondents get their food from neighborhood bodegas or stores (the same percentage as all down-county respondents), 16% from warehouse stores, and 15% from community or government programs. Approximately a third (35%) would get their food from somewhere else if they could.

Most of the at-risk focus group participants do not report significant use of, or even knowledge of the existence of alternative food sources such as community gardens, Community Supported Agriculture, or food co-ops. The only exception is farmer's markets, which are utilized during growing season. The vast majority (81%) of at-risk survey respondents from the City of Passaic receive no fresh produce from either their own gardening efforts or those of a friend or relative. Three percent reported getting some free produce from such efforts at least once a month during growing season. Only two at-risk focus group participants in the City of Passaic reported growing produce in a personal garden. Two other participants reported occasionally getting fresh produce from a friend's garden.

*Accessibility of safe, nutritious food:* There were fewer problems with access than expected, although there is significant difficulty with food access in some areas. Use of an automobile is the primary method of accessing food in city of Passaic, as it is down-county, but a much higher percentage of at-risk survey respondents report using other means of accessing food. Thirty-one percent of at-risk respondents report driving to get food and another 22% arrange for someone else to drive them, but 26% walk or ride a bicycle, 6% rely on public transportation and 6% take taxis. At risk focus group participants from city of Passaic report borrowing friends' or relatives' cars to drive to get food, and frequently use small neighborhood groceries they can get to easily on foot. No participants reported driving their own vehicle to access food. Participants mentioned taking taxis and paying friends, neighbors or relatives for the use of their cars. However, participants stated that they were unable to access better stores because of a lack of transportation. The smaller percentage utilizing public transportation in Passaic than Paterson suggests that the public transportation system may be less robust, or the food outlets more scattered, in Passaic than Paterson. This may contribute to the greater food insecurity of the elderly and those living alone, and merits further investigation.



# PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

Affordability of safe, nutritious food: Current information on affordability of food and the cost of living in the City of Passaic is sparse at the time of this writing. However, several at risk focus group participants from the City of Passaic mentioned having had difficulty getting enough food in the past year or knowing people who have had such difficulties. The primary reasons mentioned included disability or health issues, being a single parent, and seasonal employment resulting in sporadic income.

## **6. Maps: SEE APPENDIX A**

- Top Risk Factor Map: City of Passaic Municipal Boundary, Transportation stops, food deserts, location of food outlets
- Groups Most At-Risk: Elderly, Adults Living Alone, African-Americans
- Alternative Food Sources: City of Passaic Municipal Boundary, Location of Farmers' Markets/CSAs, Locations of Community Gardens)



# PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

## PART ONE: FOOD INSECURITY BY LOCATION

### B. Paterson

#### 1. Paterson General Description

The densely populated urban center of Paterson is located in the southern section of Passaic County (the bottom of the hourglass shape) known as down-county.

#### 2. Paterson General Statistics

According to the 2010 United States Census, the population of Paterson is 145,29933 which comprises 34% of the down-county area population of 431,897 and 29 % of the total county population of 501,22634. Specifically, Paterson is home to:

- 11,402 households with children headed by a single parent
- 9,316 adults living alone
- 7,763 individuals aged 65 years and over
- 14,535 individuals who self-identify as African-American
- 24,587 individuals who self-identify as Hispanic or Latino (although those numbers could be up to 40% higher, based on estimates of the undocumented)
- 207 individuals who self-identify as Native American

(Note: 2010 census data not available at this level for recent immigrants, disabled or unemployed individuals.)

#### 3. Who is experiencing food insecurity in Paterson?

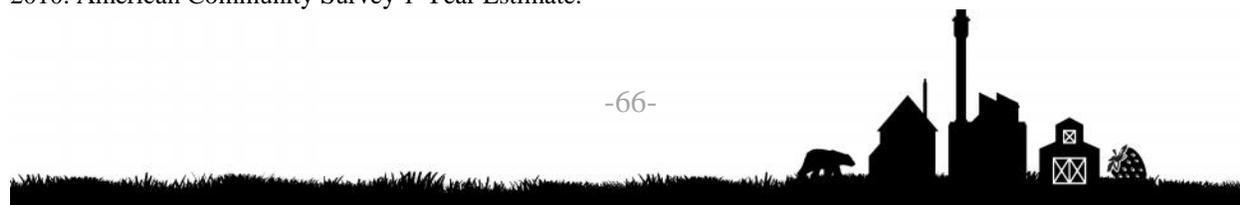
Using the application of national and statewide USDA food security statistics on Paterson, 4.4% of all Passaic County households can be expected to be experiencing low food security and 2.1% households experiencing very low food security. This means that there are approximately 1,950 Paterson households experiencing low food security and an additional 931 households experiencing very low food security. Therefore, food security is estimated to be a problem for approximately 2,881 Paterson households. However, our at-risk survey information indicates that the number could be significantly higher.

The following table shows the estimated number (where available) and percent of individuals from these groups experiencing food insecurity in Paterson based on three different methods of estimation: 1) by applying USDA food insecurity statistics for New Jersey onto the Paterson population; 2) by finding the percent of individuals in these groups who reported using two or more food insecurity coping mechanisms on our At-Risk Survey and applying that percentage to the population, and 3) by noting which groups were reported likely to experience food insecurity from our Key Informant survey.

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<sup>33</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010. American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate. Retrieved January 6, 2012 at <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

<sup>34</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder (2010). Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010. American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate.



## PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

Paterson At-risk Group	USDA statistical food insecurity estimate		Number of individuals est. food insecure using at-risk survey %		Key informant survey respondents who consider this group likely to experience food insecurity	
	Number	Percent	Number	% of respondents	# of respondents	% of respondents
Single parents with children	1,938	17%	3,649	32%	19	76%
Adults living alone	652	7%	2,515	27%	12	48%
Elderly (over age 65)	n/a	n/a	1,320	17%	20	80%
African-Americans	1,744	12%	4,361	30%	14	56%
Hispanic/Latinos	3,688	15%	6,638	27%	13	52%
Native American	n/a	n/a	35	17%	3	12%

As in the county as a whole and in the down-county area, the at-risk survey group showed much higher rates of use of coping mechanisms for food insecurity than the USDA estimates for the state would indicate. However, for all six of these at-risk groups, a higher percentage of the down-county at-risk survey respondents reported using at least two coping mechanisms than did just the Paterson respondents. Food insecurity of the elderly was overestimated by key experiencing food insecurity. In addition, food insecurity appears to be much lower among Native Americans living in Paterson than in other areas of the county.

#### 4. How severe is food insecurity in Paterson?

There appears to be more food insecurity in Paterson than in the rest of the down-county area or the county as a whole. However, Paterson's at-risk populations experience higher levels of food security than do similar populations living up-county.

- 163 (56%) Paterson respondents to the at-risk survey cited use of one to three food insecurity coping mechanisms (less severe food insecurity), compared to 52% reported by both down-county and all respondents, and to the 47% of up-county residents.
- 37 (13%) of the Paterson at-risk survey respondents cited use of four to six food insecurity coping mechanisms (more severe food insecurity), compared to 11% of the down-county respondents, 15% of respondents from the county as a whole, and 38% of up-county respondents.
- 47 (16%) of the Paterson at-risk survey respondents reported skipping meals because there wasn't enough food (more severe food insecurity) compared to 11% of down-county respondents, 13% of respondents from the county as a whole, and 28% of respondents from up-county.



## PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

- In addition, 37% of the Paterson at-risk survey respondents report that it is harder for them to get enough food this year when compared to a year ago compared to 32% of the down-county at-risk survey respondents, 35% of respondents from the county as a whole, and 42% of up-county respondents.

From their experience, 22 (88%) of the Paterson key informants think that household food insecurity is a problem or a severe problem in their Passaic County community. This compares to 84% for down-county and 82% for all the key informant respondents. Significantly, 56% of Paterson key informant respondents think that food insecurity is a severe problem compared with 47% of down-county and 43% of all key informant respondents.

### **5. What factors impact food security in Paterson?**

*Availability of safe, nutritious food:* The Paterson focus group participants on the whole felt that there is a sufficient quantity of food available within the city to feed all residents, but not all of the available food is safe and nutritious. At-risk focus group participants reported poor quality produce and meat in some of the stores they utilize. Most focus group participants were satisfied with the stores they use most, but several wished they had access to warehouse stores or upscale grocery stores to take advantage of better deals and/or fresher food. Thirty-two percent of Paterson respondents to the key informant survey perceive that safe and nutritious food is either somewhat or very unavailable in their communities, which is 5% higher than for all down-county respondents (27%).

Paterson key informant survey respondents did note the availability of alternative food sources, particularly farmer's markets, with 88% reporting the existence of one or more in the down-county community in which they live or work. A key-informant focus group participant stated, "Paterson has the best farmers market in the area, it is affordable and accessible, buses run all the time. People may have problems, though, with the cost of bus fare and the cost of food." Most Paterson at-risk focus group respondents were aware of the farmers markets and reported using them regularly during growing season.

However, other alternative food sources are less available and less utilized. Paterson key informant survey respondents noted the existence of community gardens (20% reporting availability in their community), Community Supported Agriculture (8% reporting availability), and food co-op programs (20% reporting availability.) However, most of the Paterson at-risk focus group participants do not report significant use of such food sources, or even knowledge of their existence. According to one key informant, community gardening is not popular in Paterson because it is dangerous: two people were shot since they have been gardening there. Furthermore, they report that some of the vacant land in Paterson is polluted by heavy metals. Not surprisingly, the vast majority (71%) of Paterson at-risk survey respondents receive no fresh produce from either their own gardening efforts or those of a friend or relative. Five percent reported getting some free produce from such efforts at least once a month during growing season, and a few Paterson at-risk focus group participants grow a significant quantity of produce in private gardens.



## PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

*Accessibility of safe, nutritious food:* Food access in Paterson is mixed: there are many food outlets and robust public transportation, but many people who are limited in their food choices because of transportation issues are dissatisfied with the food outlets they frequent. Twenty-four percent of the Paterson respondents to the key informant survey believe that food is either somewhat or very inaccessible (compared to 29% of down-county respondents.) More Paterson residents get their food from sources other than supermarkets: 58% of Paterson at-risk survey respondents get their food from major chain supermarkets, compared to 71% down-county. Twenty-four percent of Paterson at-risk survey respondents get their food from neighborhood bodegas or stores and another 12% from warehouse stores with another 23% getting their food from community or government programs (compared to 13% from community/government programs for down-county). More than a third (39%) would get their food from somewhere else if they could.

As in other parts of the county, use of an automobile is the primary method of accessing food in Paterson. However, a much higher percentage of Paterson at-risk survey respondents report using other means of accessing food. Thirty percent of at-risk respondents report driving to get food and another 28% arrange for someone else to drive them, but 19% walk or ride a bicycle, 13% rely on public transportation and 1% take taxis. At risk focus group participants from Paterson report borrowing friends' or relatives' cars to drive to get food, and frequently use small neighborhood groceries they can access easily on foot. Only one Paterson at-risk focus group participant reported driving his own car to get to the grocery store. Participants also reported paying for taxis in order to access grocery stores, particularly in bad weather or if they had children in tow.

*Affordability of safe, nutritious food:* As in other areas of the county, affordability of safe, nutritious food is a key concern to both focus group and survey respondents. Forty-eight percent of Paterson key informant survey respondents reported that safe, nutritious food is either somewhat or very unaffordable (compared to 51% for down-county and 49% for all key informant respondents). Paterson focus group participants spoke less about the overall expense of food than about the cost of living in general. Many Paterson at-risk focus group participants spoke of utilizing community and government programs such as Oasis and Food Stamps. A key informant stated that there has been a 62% increase in food pantry use in the last four years, while another key informant mentioned a 20% increase in the past few months alone. Several Paterson focus group participants expressed special concern for the elderly, single parents and former convicts attempting to reintegrate into society. Government programs and outside sources of funding are not seen as adequate to meet the need. Paterson focus group participants agreed that food stamps are not an option for many people who sit just above the income cut-off, but who still face a high cost of living. And according to key informants, funding for emergency food programs has been slashed, despite a rapidly escalating increase in need.

### **6. Maps: SEE APPENDIX A**

- Top Three Risk Factor Map: Paterson only: Municipal Boundary, Poverty, Unemployment, Housing Affordability/Cost Burdens
- Alternative Food Sources: Paterson only: Municipal Boundary, Location of Farmers' Markets/CSAs, Locations of Community Gardens)



# PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

## **PART FIVE: FOOD FOR THOUGHT:**

**Observations and ideas generated through qualitative research**



## PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

### **Thoughts on root causes of food insecurity:**

At-risk focus group respondents cited personal financial problems as the primary cause of food insecurity. Loss of family income through job loss or the loss of a spouse through death or divorce, and health issues were frequently cited as causes of food insecurity. Families also report “doubling up;” younger people having economic difficulties moving back in with their parents. In these cases, older people are finding themselves struggling to support not only themselves, but their adult children and grandchildren. High costs also play a role, particularly the cost of health care – even when medically insured – as well as the cost of housing, transportation, and childcare, as well as other costs associated with raising children, such as diapers and school fees.

Key informants agreed that food-insecure people just don’t have enough money to live on, and that unemployment is the number one underlying factor. They brought up practical issues such as the fact that people who have had their utilities cut off can’t cook most of the food they get from a food pantry, and need other sources of cooked food such as congregate meals. But key informants pointed to other systemic problems. They mentioned market forces, such as the fact that many large grocery stores are closing due to the increase in super one-stop shopping complexes which are easily accessible only to those with personal vehicles. They brought up problems with the way that food waste is handled: 40% of food produced doesn’t end up being consumed. Many supermarkets ship their leftover food to centralized food banks instead of to local food pantries, and much of that food never returns to the community. Other stores say they can’t give the food away so it goes to a landfill. They also cited issues with safety, parking and security at food stores and an over-abundance of fast food outlets and liquor stores. They also discussed food-insecure people’s lack of knowledge either of the existence of available resources or of how to access them. Nutrition education, including how to cook, was presented as a need.

### **Thoughts on alternative food sources:**

Of all alternative food sources, farmer’s markets appeared to be the most available and utilized by at-risk focus group participants, particularly when participants were able to use vouchers provided by community or government services. But they are not always in areas convenient to people who do not own their own vehicles. Only a few had heard of Community Supported Agriculture or food co-ops, and no one had utilized them.

Key Informants had much to say about farmers’ markets. They lauded them as good sources of fresh produce, but noted that prices are still sometimes unaffordable to individuals with low incomes. They supported the expansion of coupon programs to allow more people to purchase produce, although one informant noted that a lot of farmers market nutrition program dollars for seniors go to waste. They also noted that some farmer’s markets are not easily accessible, and they are not always held on days and times convenient to working people. Safety is also an issue: it can be difficult to set up markets in neighborhoods perceived as dangerous.

### **Thoughts on home and community gardening:**

While a few at-risk focus group participants grew some food at home and others received home-grown produce from family or friends, none participated in community gardening, although some liked the idea. Several seniors liked to garden, but lacked the physical capacity for the



## PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

heavier work involved. A few people had small backyard or patio gardens in urban areas. Overall, fresh home-grown produce was a small but welcome part of participants' diets.

When discussing community and home gardening, key informants were generally enthusiastic, but noted some barriers. Safety was one: two people were shot since in one community garden. Contaminated soil, both in the upper Ringwood area and also in vacant lots and other urban properties, was also mentioned as a barrier. Participants suggested rooftop gardening, hydroponics, raised beds, and phyto-remediation as ways to get around this. But they also stressed a need to educate people – especially younger people who have had little experience with fresh produce -- on how to grow, cook and store fresh food. One suggestion was to have senior citizens help teach young people. On a related note, one suggestion was to raise the limit on deer hunting and provide ways for hunters to donate deer meat.

### Thoughts on coping mechanisms:

When faced with food insecurity, people around the world resort to a consistent, universal set of coping mechanisms:

- Changing their diet (switching to cheaper, less preferred foods).
- Increasing food supplies by hunting, fishing or growing food, or by using short term, unsustainable means such as borrowing, purchasing on credit, begging, or hoarding food.
- Reducing the number of people to feed by sending some of them elsewhere to be fed, such as sending children to neighbors' homes at dinnertime or to programs in which they will receive meals.
- Rationing food by cutting portion sizes, skipping meals, or feeding some members of the household before others.<sup>35</sup>

Both at-risk focus group respondents and key informants reported use of these coping mechanisms by food insecure people in Passaic County. Food-insecure people change their diet by increasing their reliance on cheap, carbohydrate-heavy foods. If they have the knowledge and means to cook and access to ingredients, they might cook healthier inexpensive foods such as beans and rice or eggs. If they cannot cook because their electricity is turned off, they don't know how, or they are working two jobs and are pressed for time, they will rely on unhealthier options such as fast food, or engage in practices such as watering down infant formula or adding coffee creamer to stretch it. They usually turn to family and friends for assistance before going to church, community, or government programs. They try to increase food supplies by applying for assistance such as SNAP or WIC, and go to food pantries or congregate meals. Some steal, beg, sell their possessions, or sell drugs to raise money. Some focus group participants hoard in a positive way – buying more food than needed when money is available and saving it for winter, when many types of work are scarce. Others hoard in more negative ways, going from food pantry to food pantry to get extra assistance. They have their children fed through school lunch programs, but struggle during the summer. Finally, they go hungry. Both at-risk and key informant focus group members spoke of parents feeding children but not themselves. One

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<sup>35</sup> The Coping Strategies Index Field Methods Manual, Second Edition, January 2008.



## PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

at-risk survey respondent who checked off “skipped meals because there wasn’t enough food” on the survey felt compelled to write in, “but never my kids.”)

### Thoughts on how to improve food security in Passaic County:

Some suggestions included:

- provide culturally sensitive education related to nutrition, exercise, and resource management,
- provide cultural sensitivity/customer service training to social services workers,
- teach the importance and power of social marketing of healthy food and habits, as well as the ins and outs of media literacy to teenagers;
- institutionalize a policy in which large organizations (hospitals, schools, etc) provide jobs to teenagers and children producing food on vacant lots,
- teach time and resource management, work to change the taste of people related to healthy food and healthy social values;
- remember to engage the school system in whatever food related work is done in Passaic County,
- improve the food system so that less is wasted and more gets to people who need it,
- provide support to purchase essential non-food consumables such as diapers, toilet tissue, and personal hygiene items;
- provide mobile food stores on wheels to people who can’t leave their homes,
- provide a pharmacy bank, and have medicines delivered to the homebound;
- develop community gardens and greenhouses;
- Provide more free or affordable after-school care and day care.
- increase the amount of affordable housing available, including more shelter for the homeless and more apartments for senior citizens;
- provide extra support for the formerly incarcerated returning to the community, and to victims of domestic violence;
- increase food support during school breaks, provide meals for children when school is not in session;
- improve transportation systems in underserved areas,
- bring in industry to provide more jobs,
- create subsidized grocery stores in which part of the cost of food is covered by other sources,
- remove health code barriers to providing congregate meals,
- supervise nursing homes to make sure the residents are being fed and cared for properly,
- increase funding for family planning and women’s healthcare, and
- help more kids go to college so they can get good jobs.



# PASSAIC COUNTY HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES REPORT

## MAPS: APPENDIX A





### Custom PolicyMap Analytic of Passaic

**Data Layer 1**

Estimated per capita income between 2005-2009.

▼ ▼

\$0 \$33,962

Shaded by: Census Tract  
Source: Census

**Data Layer 2**

Estimated percent of all renters who are cost burdened between 2005-2009.

▼ ▼

0% 33.93%

Shaded by: Census Tract  
Source: Census

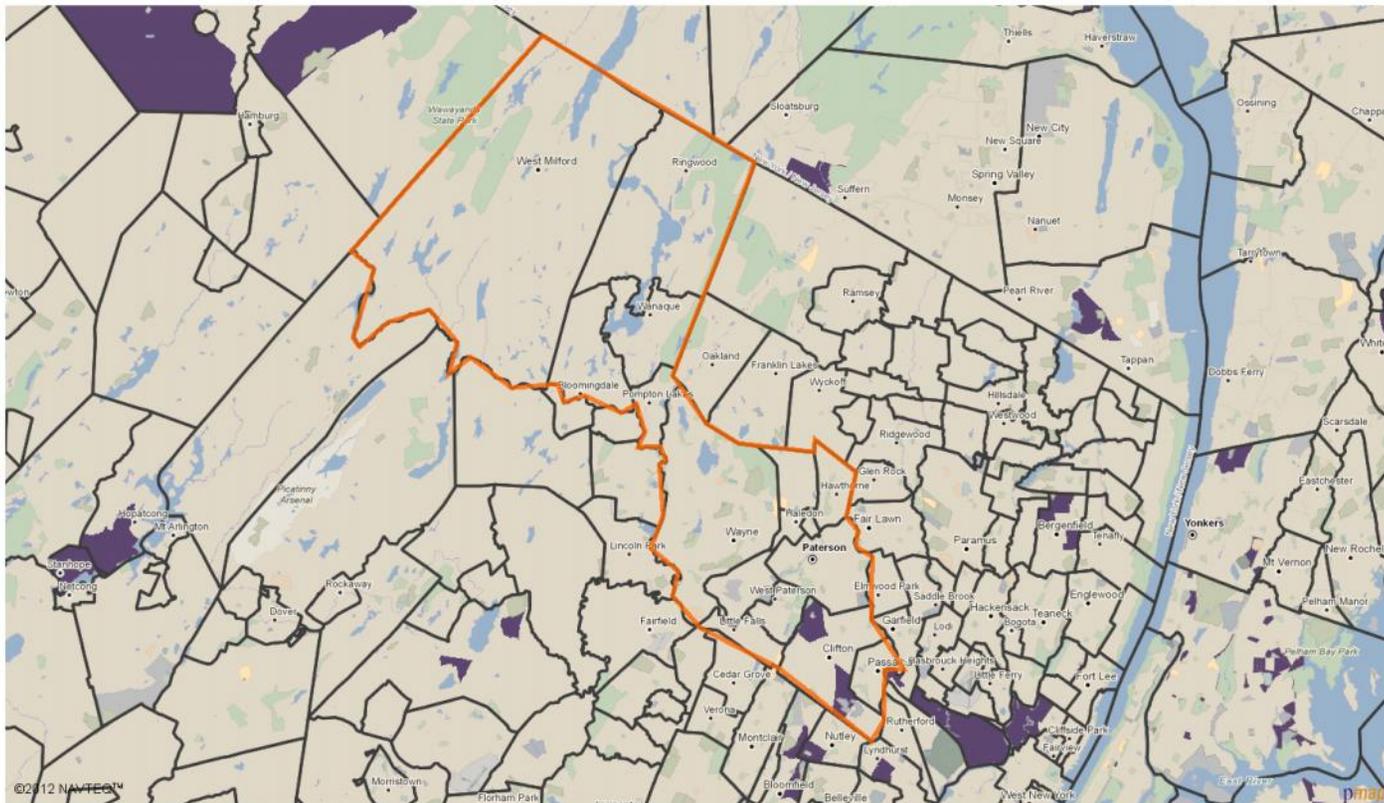
**Data Layer 3**

Percent of population that received Food Stamps in July 2008.

▼ ▼

0.18% 51.1%

Shaded by: County  
Source: SAIFE & Census Pop Estimates



Purple areas on the map meet all criteria below.

Data Layer 1: Estimated per capita income between 2005-2009. Range: \$0 - \$33,962.

Data Layer 2: Estimated percent of all renters who are cost burdened between 2005-2009. Range: 0% - 33.93%.

Data Layer 3: Percent of population that received Food Stamps in July 2008. Range: 0.18% - 51.1%.

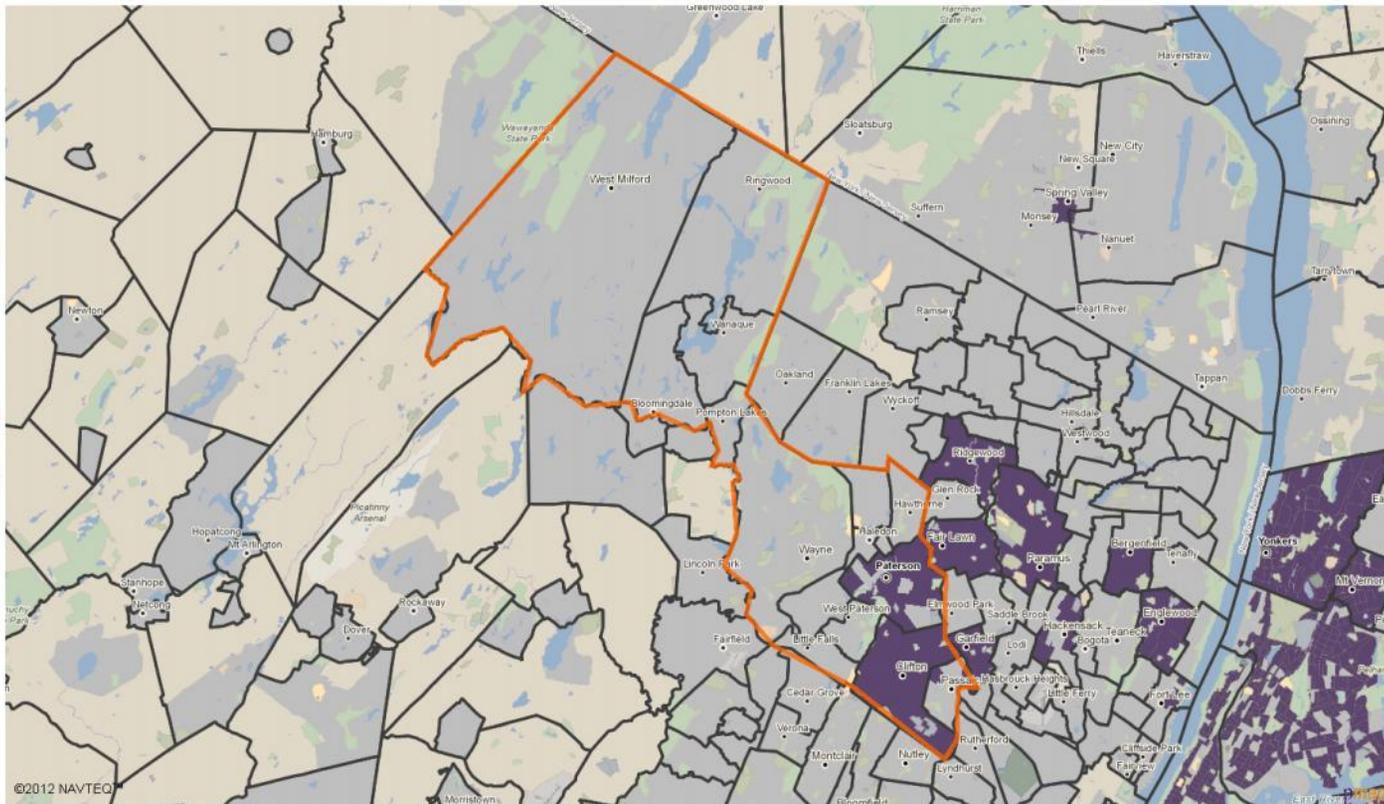


### Custom PolicyMap Analytic of Passaic

**Data Layer 1**  
Percent of all people over 5 who have a disability in 2000.  
0% 100%  
Shaded by: Census Tract  
Source: Census

**Data Layer 2**  
Percent of all people who are American Indian or Alaskan Native in 2010.  
0% 100%  
Shaded by: Census Tract  
Source: Census

**Data Layer 3**  
Unemployment rate in 2010.  
2.7% 37.8%  
Shaded by: City  
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics



Purple areas on the map meet all criteria below:  
Data Layer 1: Percent of all people over 5 who have a disability in 2000. Range: 0% - 100%.  
Data Layer 2: Percent of all people who are American Indian or Alaskan Native in 2010. Range: 0% - 100%.  
Data Layer 3: Unemployment rate in 2010. Range: 2.7% - 37.8%.

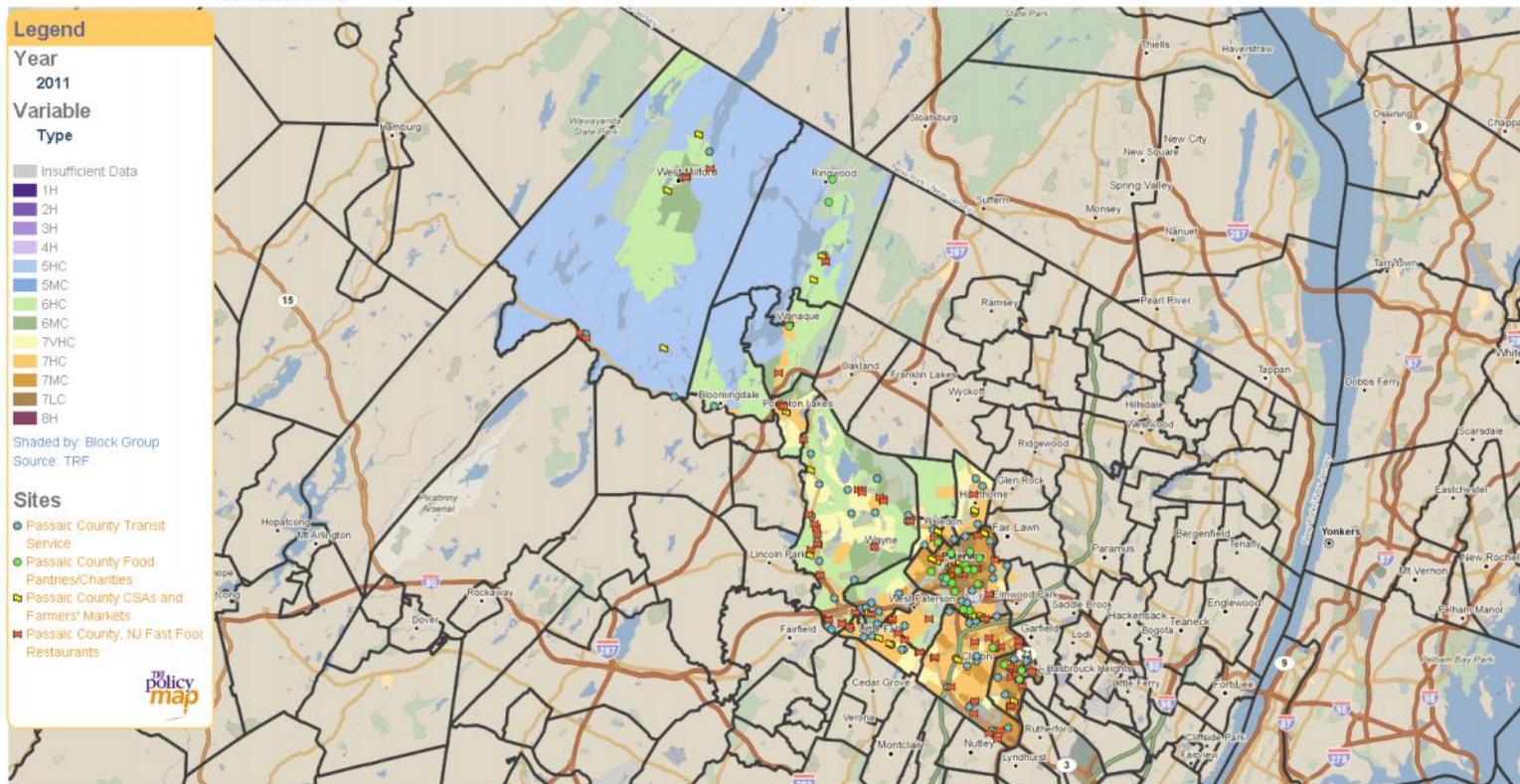




### Map of Passaic County Transit Service, Passaic County Food Pantries/Charities, Passaic County CSAs and Farmers' Markets, Passaic County, NJ Fast Food Restaurants with Population/Car Ownership Classification (Population Density, % Car Ownership, Distance from Food Outlets in Miles), as of 2011.

#### Population/Car Ownership Classification, as of 2011.

TRF categorized all block groups in the continental US into categories using Census data for population density and car ownership rates. This process resulted in 12 categories ranging from: Density 1 (lowest density - high car ownership) to Density 7 (highest density - lowest car ownership). Areas designated as "insufficient data" were not included in the study. Please see the Data Directory for our methodology, for the family of LSA indicators, and for the exclusion criteria.



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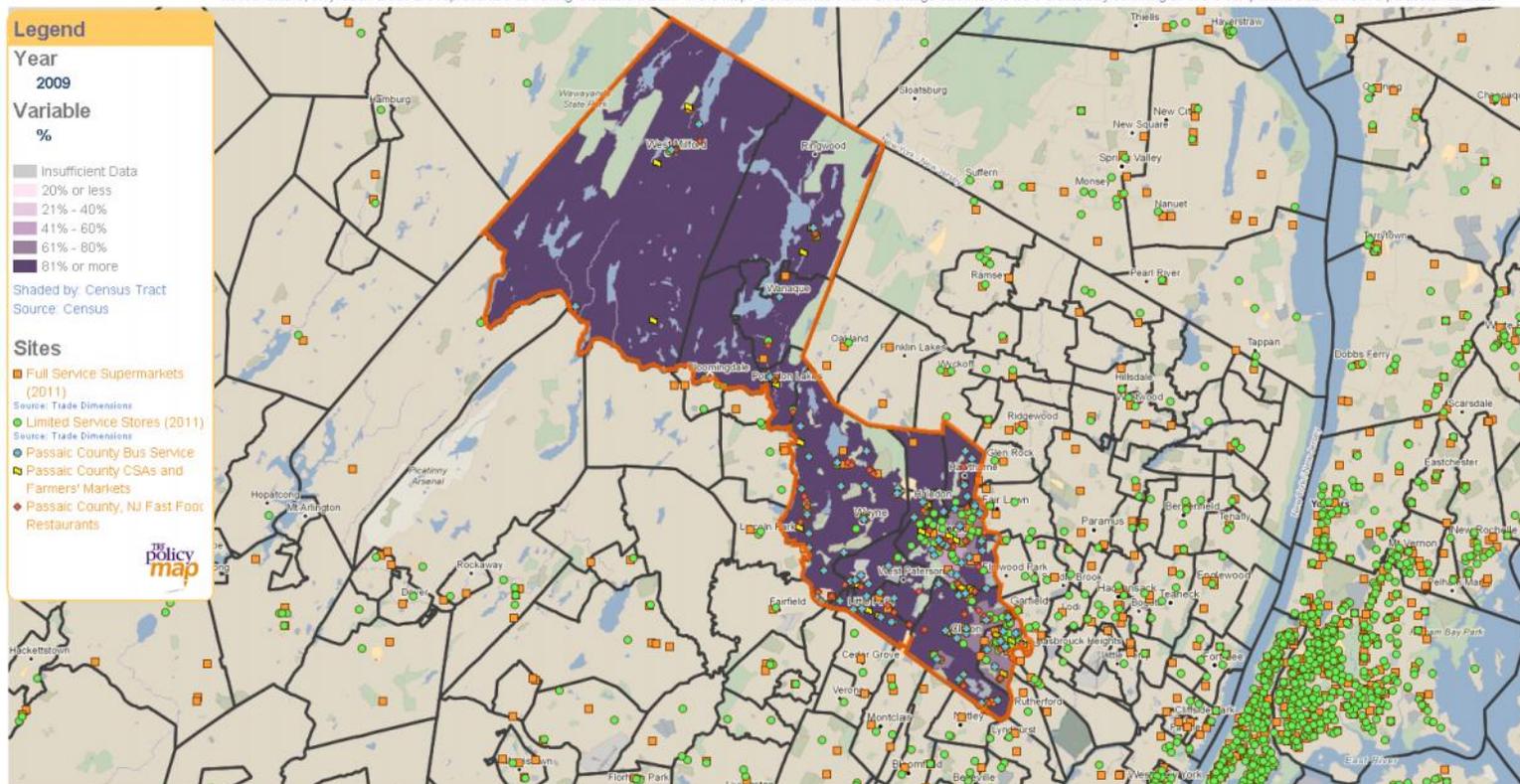




**Map of Custom Region (Passaic County Municipalities) and Passaic with Full Service Supermarkets (2011), Limited Service Stores (2011), Passaic County Bus Service, Passaic County CSAs and Farmers' Markets, Passaic County, NJ Fast Food Restaurants and Estimated percent of workers who drove to work in 2005-2009.**

**Estimated percent of workers who drove to work in 2005-2009.**

Estimated percent of workers age 16 years or older who did not work at home who commuted to work by motor vehicle in 2005-2009. The number of workers commuting by motor vehicle include those driving a car, truck or van alone and those taking car or van pool services to work. Percentage calculations were suppressed in cases where the denominator of the calculation was less than 10 of the unit that is being described (eg, households, people, householders, etc). Such areas are represented as having "Insufficient Data" in the map. Denominators for Percentage calculations were created by summing all of the component data items in a particular dataset.



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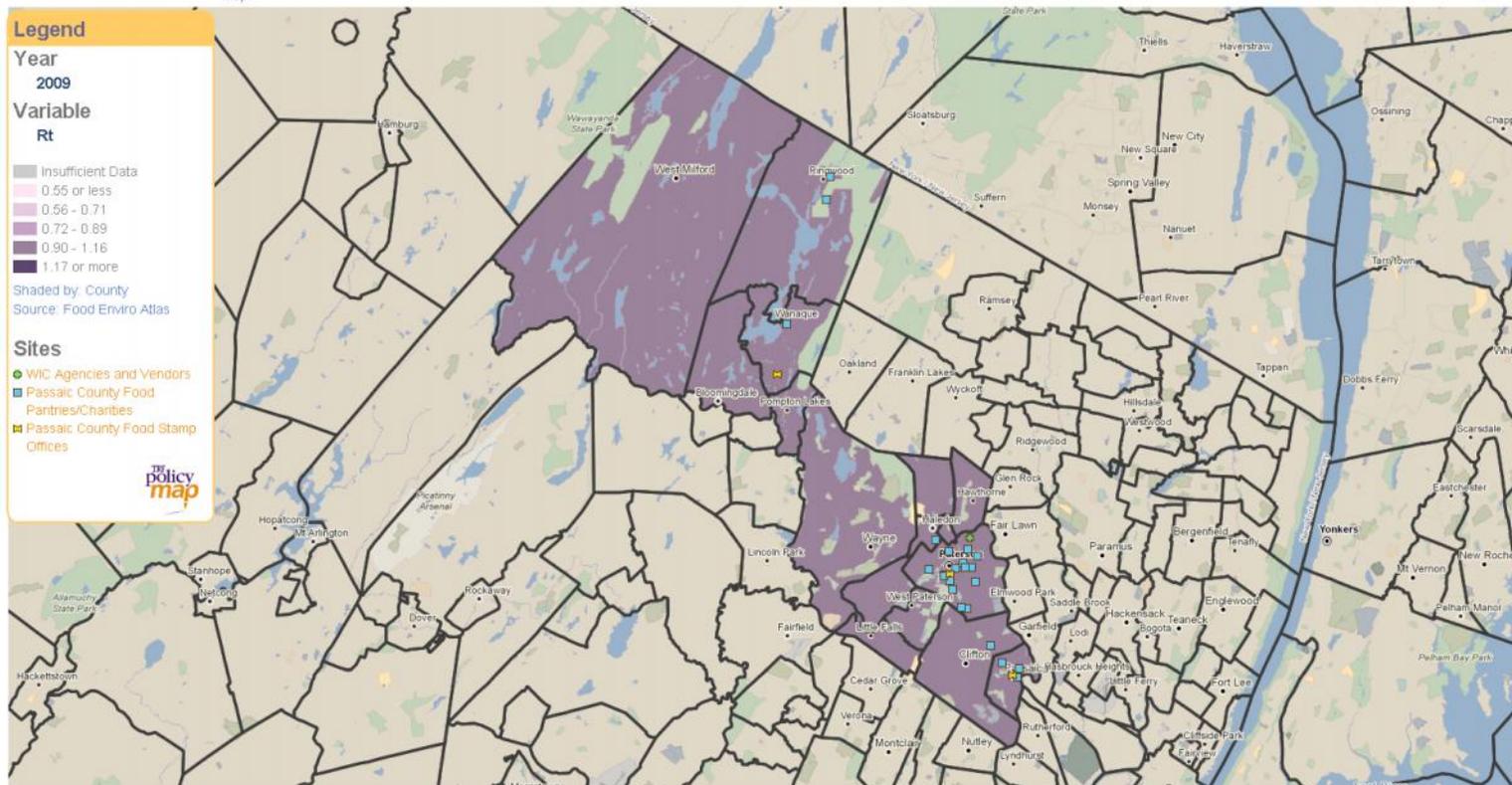




**Map of Passaic with WIC Agencies and Vendors, Passaic County Food Pantries/Charities, Passaic County Food Stamp Offices with Number of SNAP-authorized stores per 1,000 population in 2009.**

**Number of SNAP-authorized stores per 1,000 population in 2009.**

Number of stores authorized to accept the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), previously called the Food Stamp Program, per 1,000 people as of 2009. Store types include supermarkets, large, small and medium grocery stores, specialized food stores and meal service providers. Data are reported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Environment Atlas. Areas where data are not available are labeled "Insufficient Data" on the map.

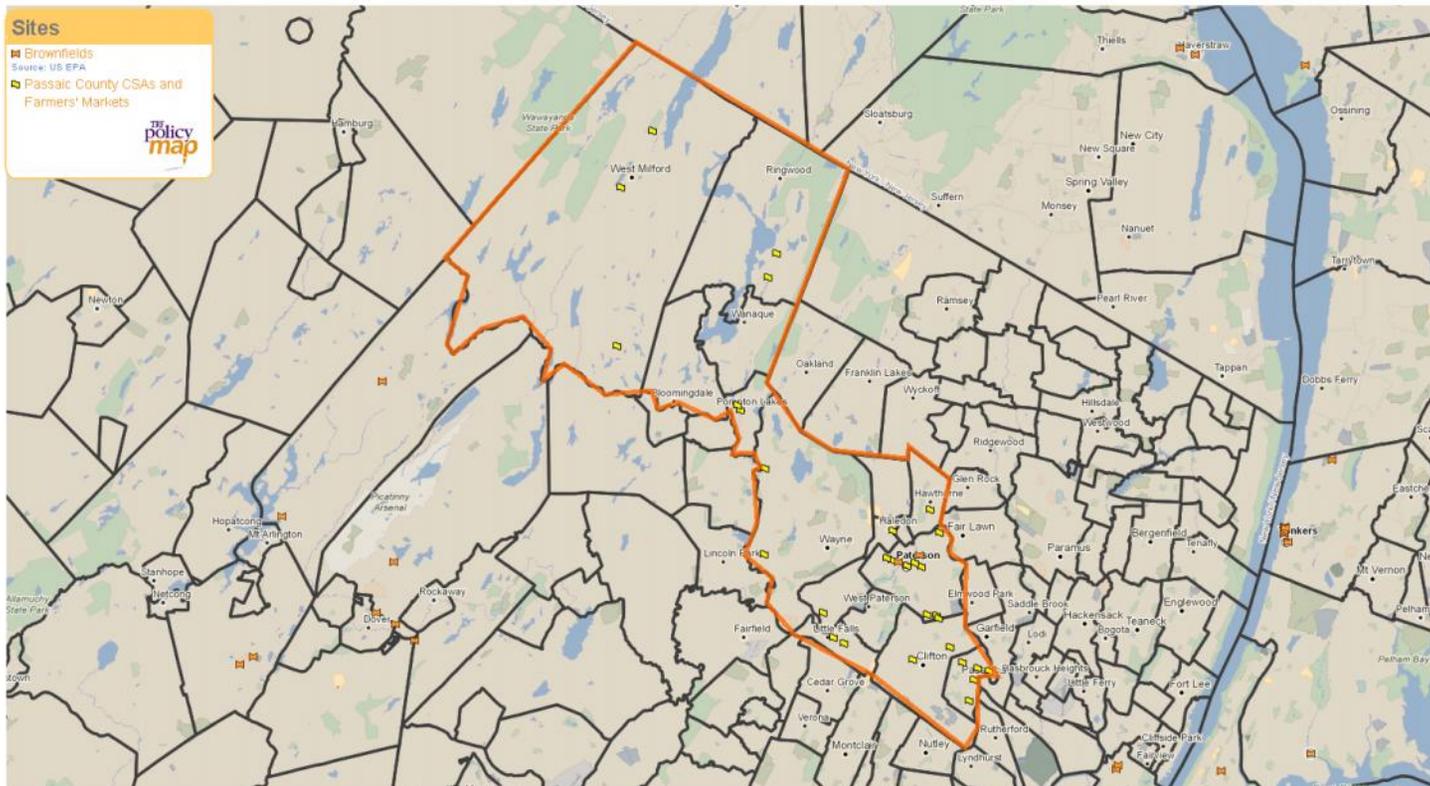


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### Map of Passaic with Brownfields, Passaic County CSAs and Farmers' Markets

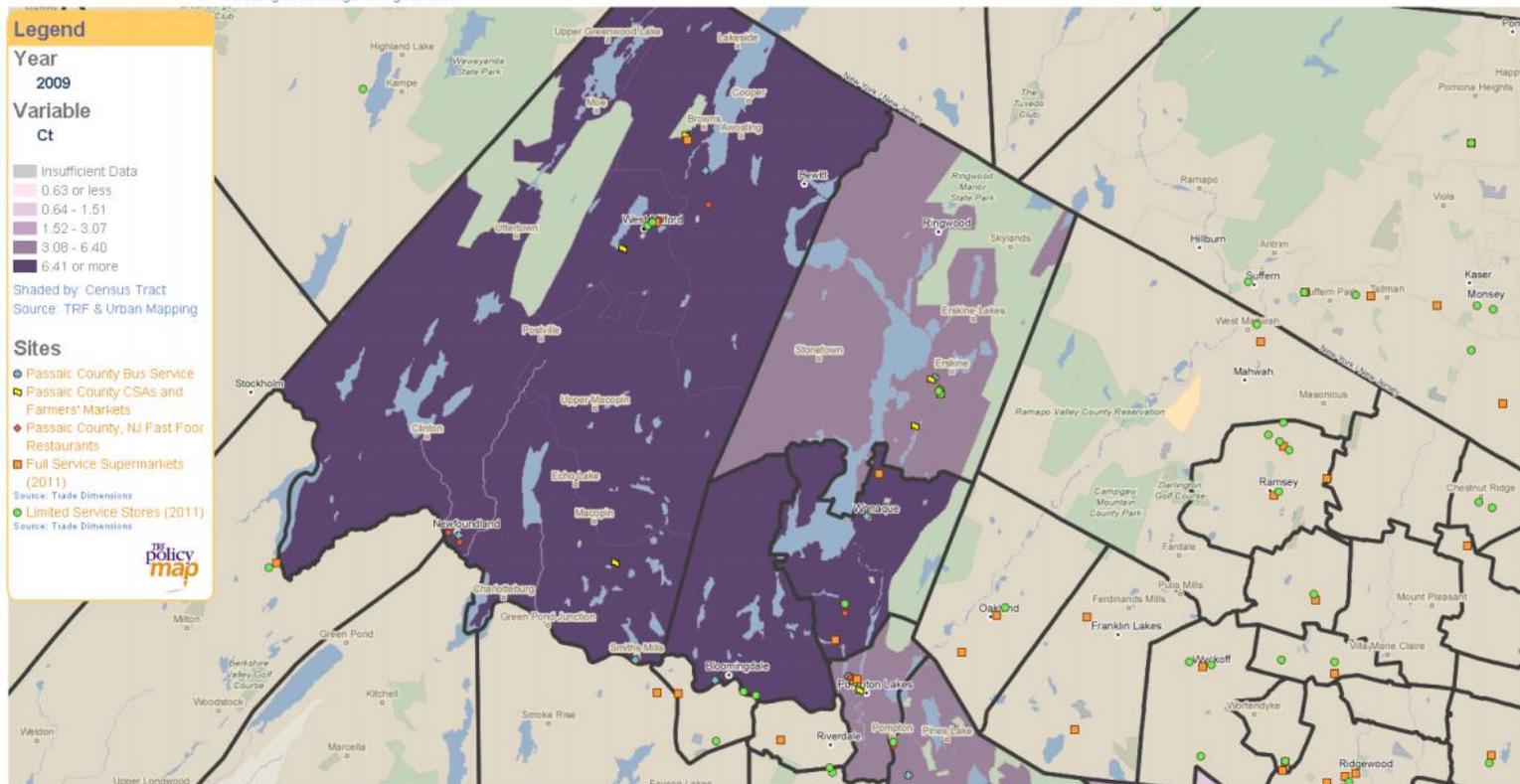




**Map of Passaic with Full Service Supermarkets (2011), Limited Service Stores (2011), Passaic County Bus Service, Passaic County CSAs and Farmers' Markets, Passaic County, NJ Fast Food Restaurants and Distance to closest public transit rail stop in miles, as of 2009.**

**Distance to closest public transit rail stop in miles, as of 2009.**

Distance to closest public transit rail stop in miles, as of 2009. Distance was calculated from the center point of the Census Tract. Public transit rail stops are taken from the Urban Mapping inventory of rail stops, as of March 2009. For more information about the geographic coverage of Urban Mapping data, see the Data Directory. Grey areas of the map are labeled as having Insufficient Data if they are more than fifteen miles from a rail stop, possibly indicating no coverage for a given area.

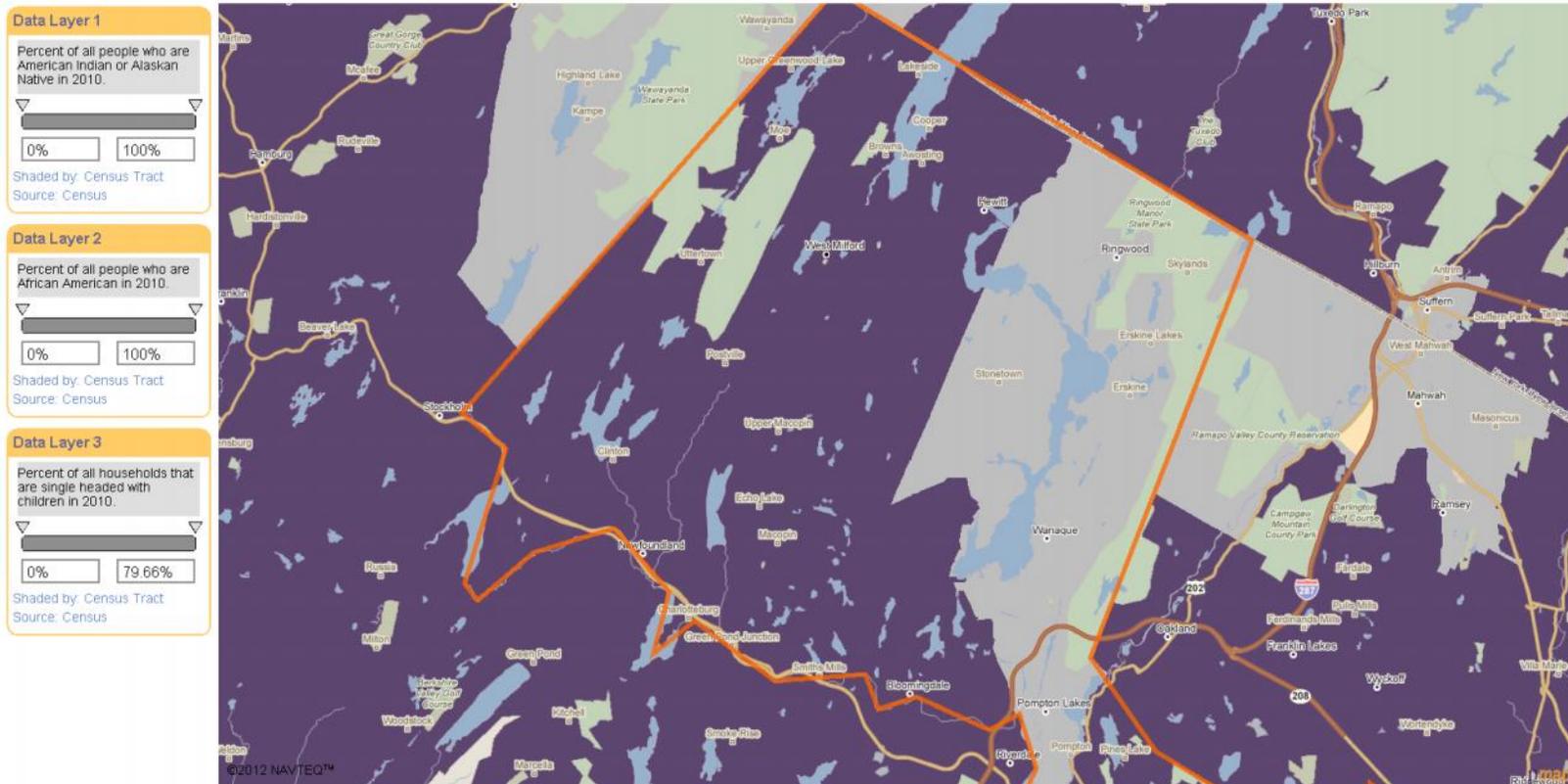


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### PolicyMap Analytic of Passaic County Native American and African-American Single-Parent Households



Purple areas on the map meet all criteria below:  
Data Layer 1: Percent of all people who are American Indian or Alaskan Native in 2010. Range: 0% - 100%.  
Data Layer 2: Percent of all people who are African American in 2010. Range: 0% - 100%.  
Data Layer 3: Percent of all households that are single headed with children in 2010. Range: 0% - 79.66%.

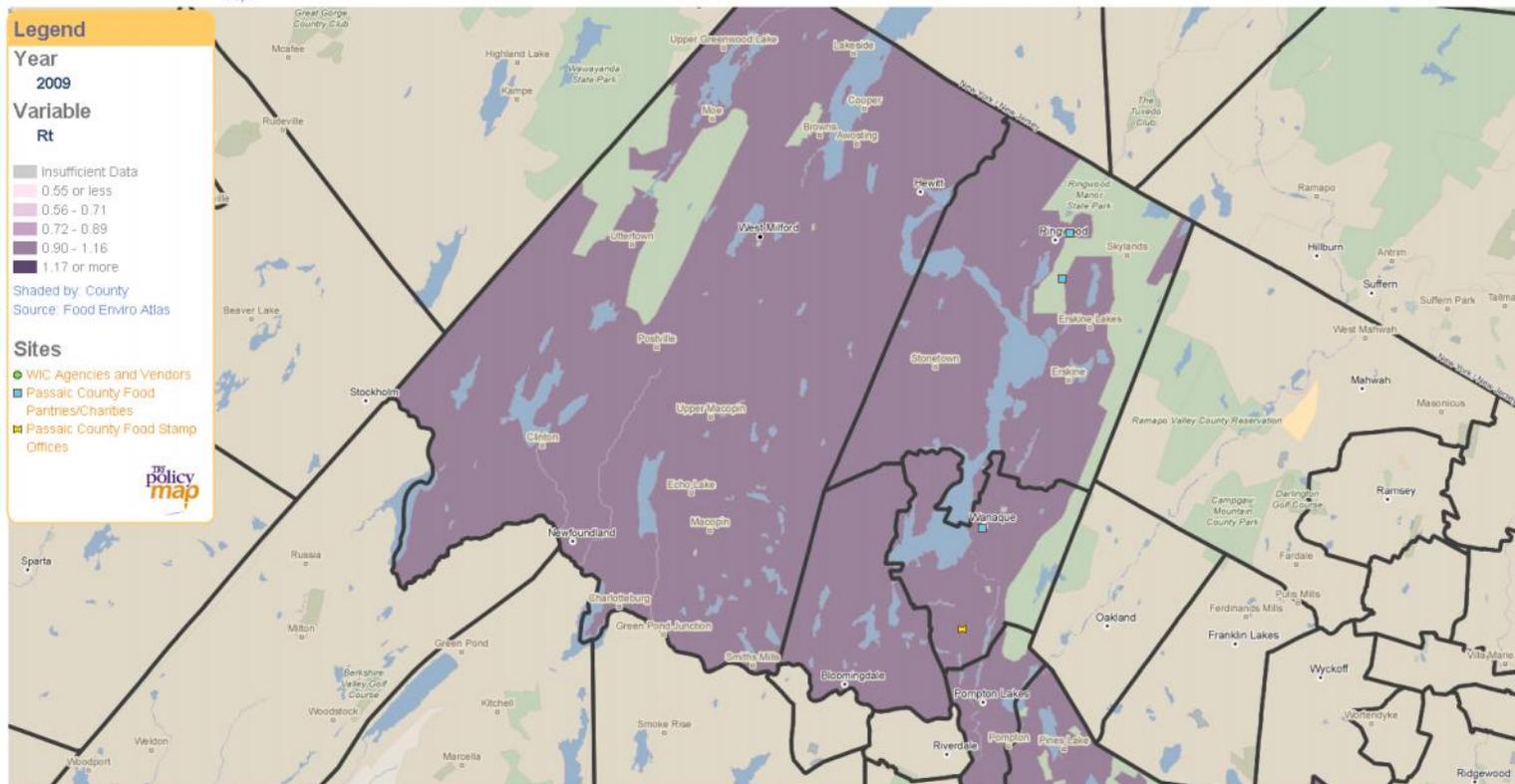




**Map of Passaic with WIC Agencies and Vendors, Passaic County Food Pantries/Charities, Passaic County Food Stamp Offices with Number of SNAP-authorized stores per 1,000 population in 2009.**

**Number of SNAP-authorized stores per 1,000 population in 2009.**

Number of stores authorized to accept the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), previously called the Food Stamp Program, per 1,000 people as of 2009. Store types include supermarkets, large, small and medium grocery stores, specialized foodstores and meal service providers. Data are reported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Environment Atlas. Areas where data are not available are labeled "Insufficient Data" on the map.

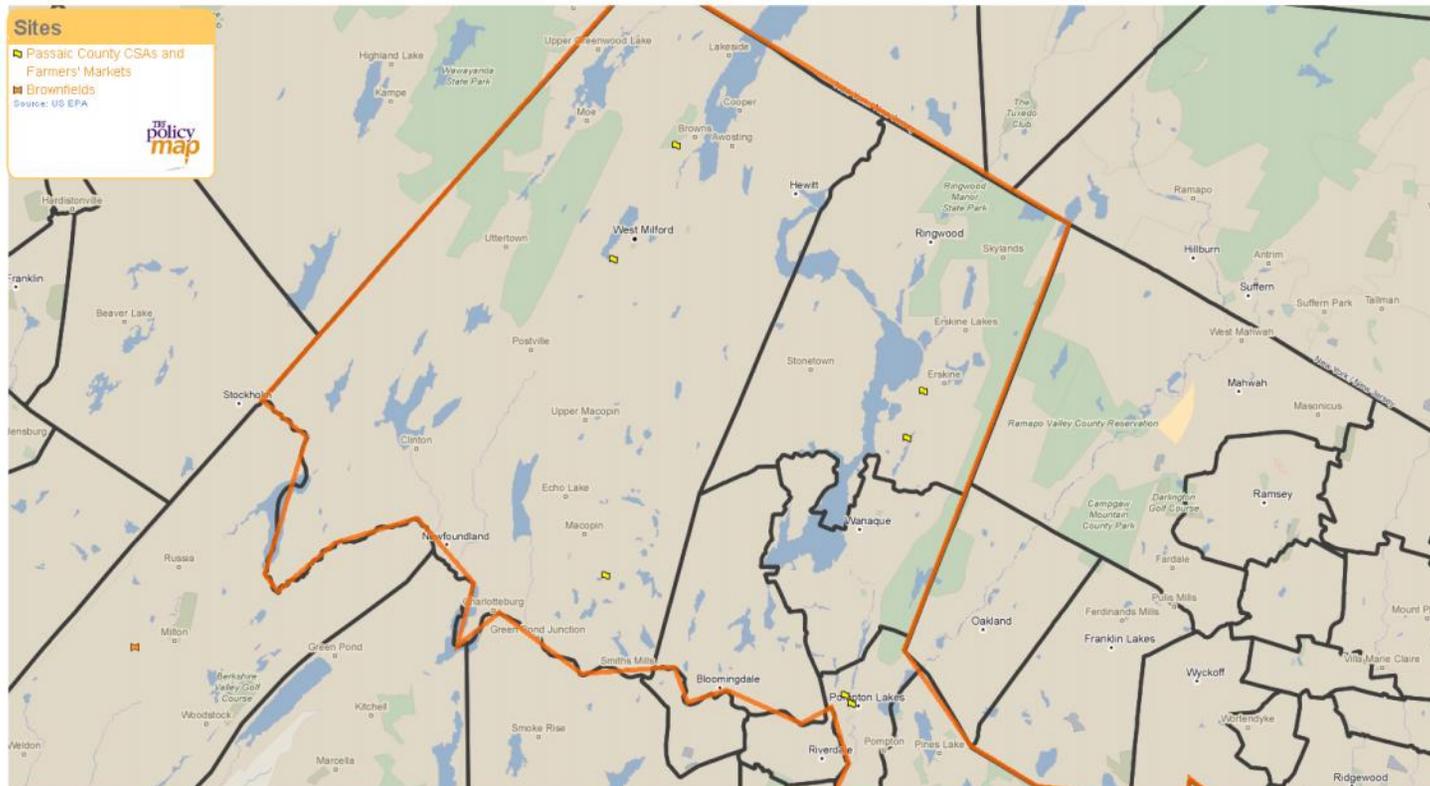


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### Map of Passaic with Brownfields, Passaic County CSAs and Farmers' Markets



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### Custom PolicyMap Analytic of Passaic

**Data Layer 1**

Unemployment rate in 2010.

▼

2.7% 37.8%

Shaded by: City  
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

**Data Layer 2**

Estimated percent of all families that live in poverty between 2005-2009.

▼

7.74% 50.6%

Shaded by: Census Tract  
Source: Census

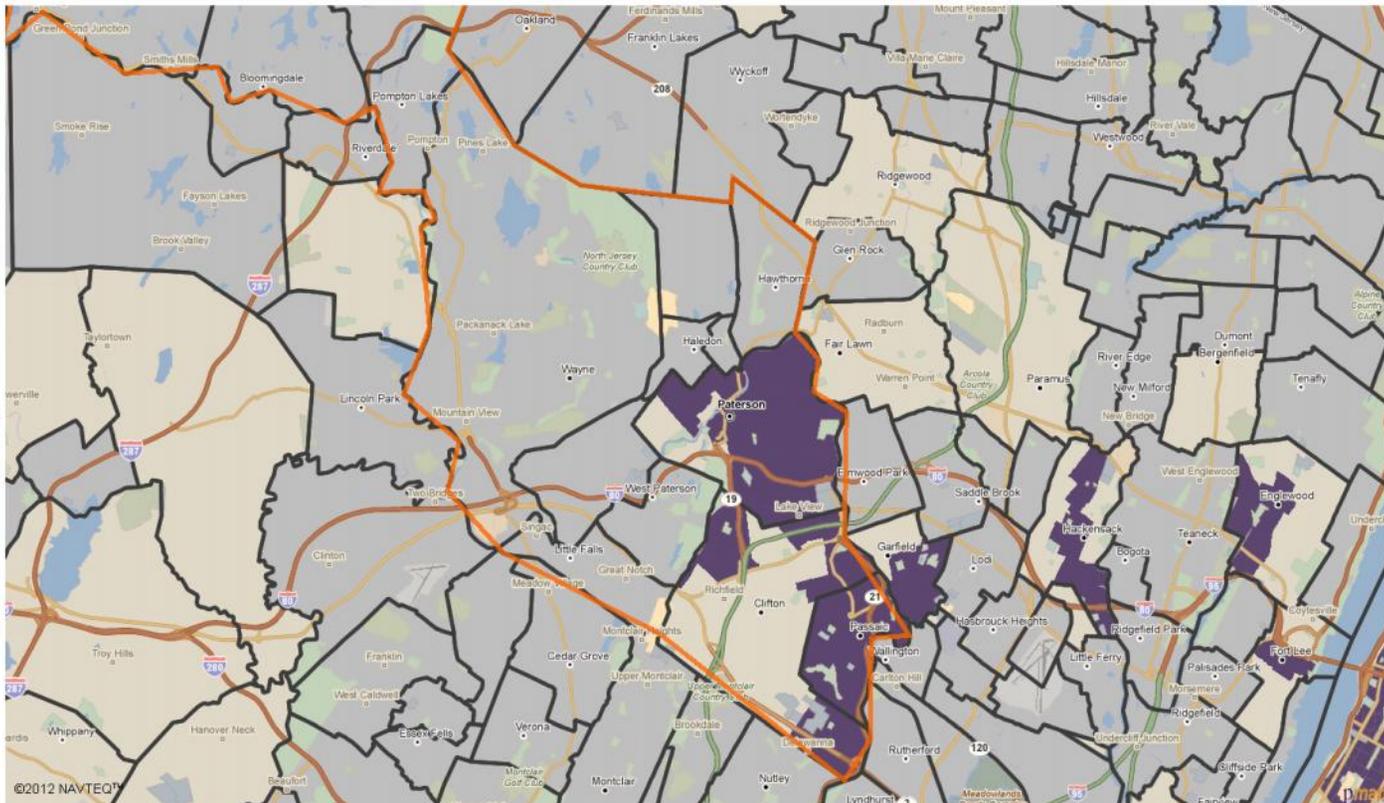
**Data Layer 3**

Total WIC redemptions as of 2009.

▼

\$0 \$341,197,173

Shaded by: County  
Source: Food Enviro Atlas



Purple areas on the map meet all criteria below.  
Data Layer 1: Unemployment rate in 2010. Range: 2.7% - 37.8%.  
Data Layer 2: Estimated percent of all families that live in poverty between 2005-2009. Range: 7.74% - 50.6%.  
Data Layer 3: Total WIC redemptions as of 2009. Range: \$0 - \$341,197,173.





### Custom PolicyMap Analytic of Passaic

**Data Layer 1**

Unemployment rate in 2010.

7.31% | 37.8%

Shaded by: City  
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

**Data Layer 2**

Percent of all people over 5 who have a disability in 2000.

10.12% | 99.4%

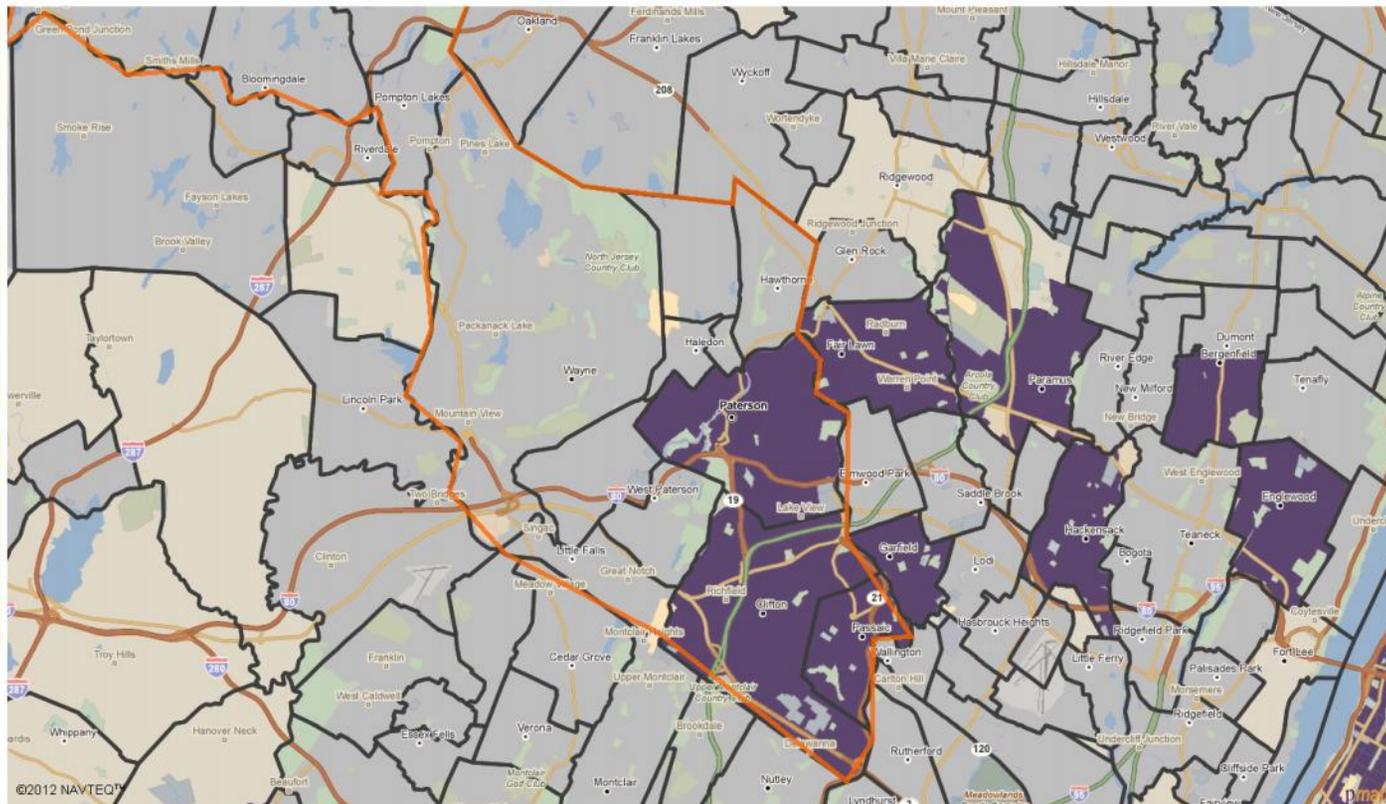
Shaded by: Census Tract  
Source: Census

**Data Layer 3**

Of all people who received green cards in FY2010, the percent residing in each state.

4.99% | 19.95%

Shaded by: State  
Source: Department of Homeland Security



Purple areas on the map meet all criteria below

Data Layer 1: Unemployment rate in 2010. Range: 7.31% - 37.8%.

Data Layer 2: Percent of all people over 5 who have a disability in 2000. Range: 10.12% - 99.4%.

Data Layer 3: Of all people who received green cards in FY2010, the percent residing in each state. Range: 4.99% - 19.95%.

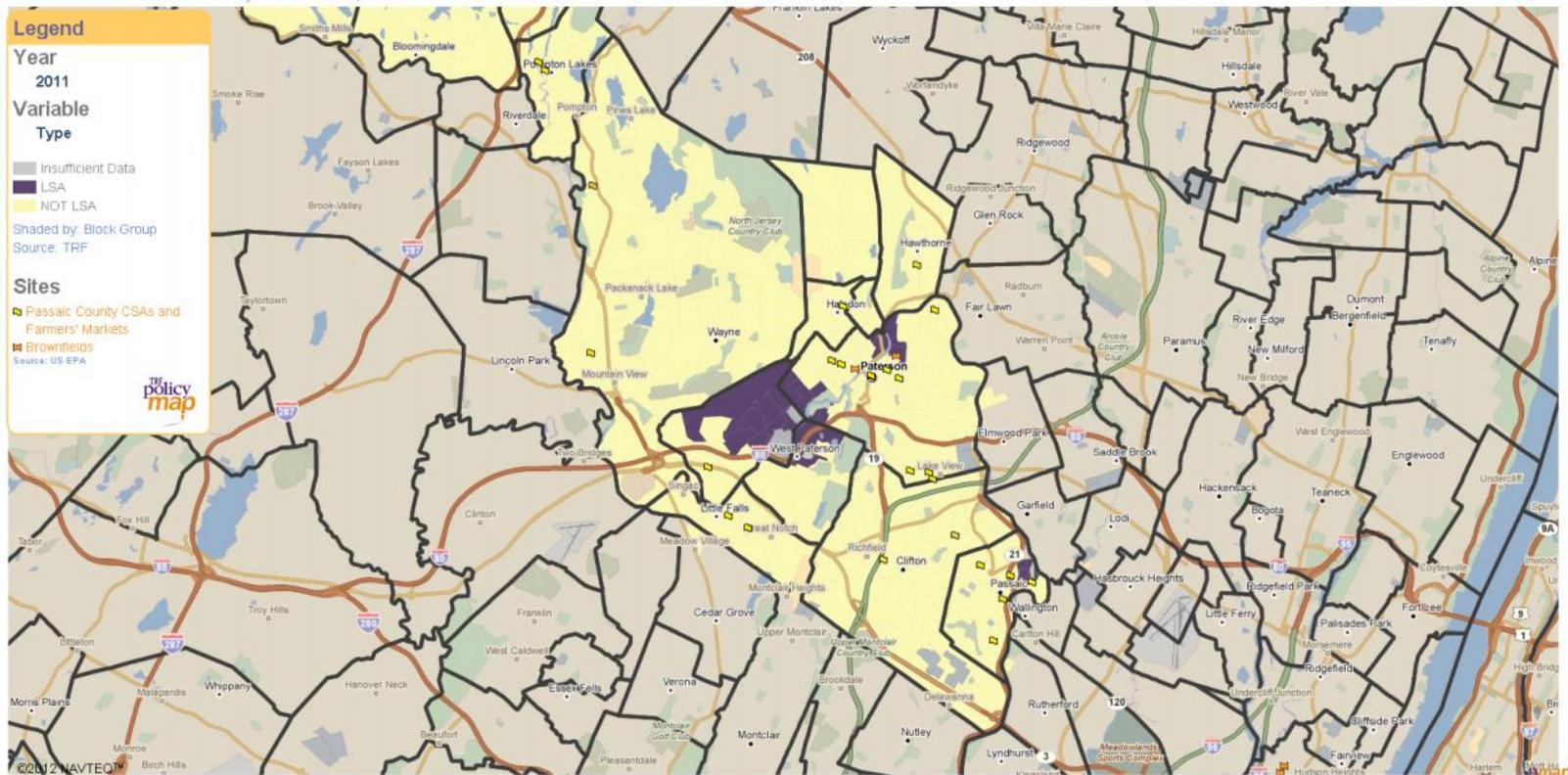




### Map of Passaic with Brownfields, Passaic County CSAs and Farmers' Markets and Limited Supermarket Access (LSA) status, as of 2011.

#### Limited Supermarket Access (LSA) status, as of 2011.

All block groups included in the Limited Supermarket Access Study are designated as either "LSA" (within a Limited Supermarket Access) or "Not LSA" (not within a Limited Supermarket Access) according to TRF's analysis. TRF's methodology is designed to identify areas where residents travel longer distances to reach supermarkets when compared to the benchmark (average) distance traveled by residents of non-low/moderate income areas. Comparative areas are grouped based on similar values for population density and car ownership rates. The data sources include US Census (2010) for population living in households, residential land area, US Census ACS data (2005-2009) for car ownership rates, and Trade Dimensions (2011) data for supermarket locations. Areas designated as "Insufficient Data" were not included in the study. Please see the Data Directory for our methodology, for the family of LSA indicators, and for the exclusion criteria.



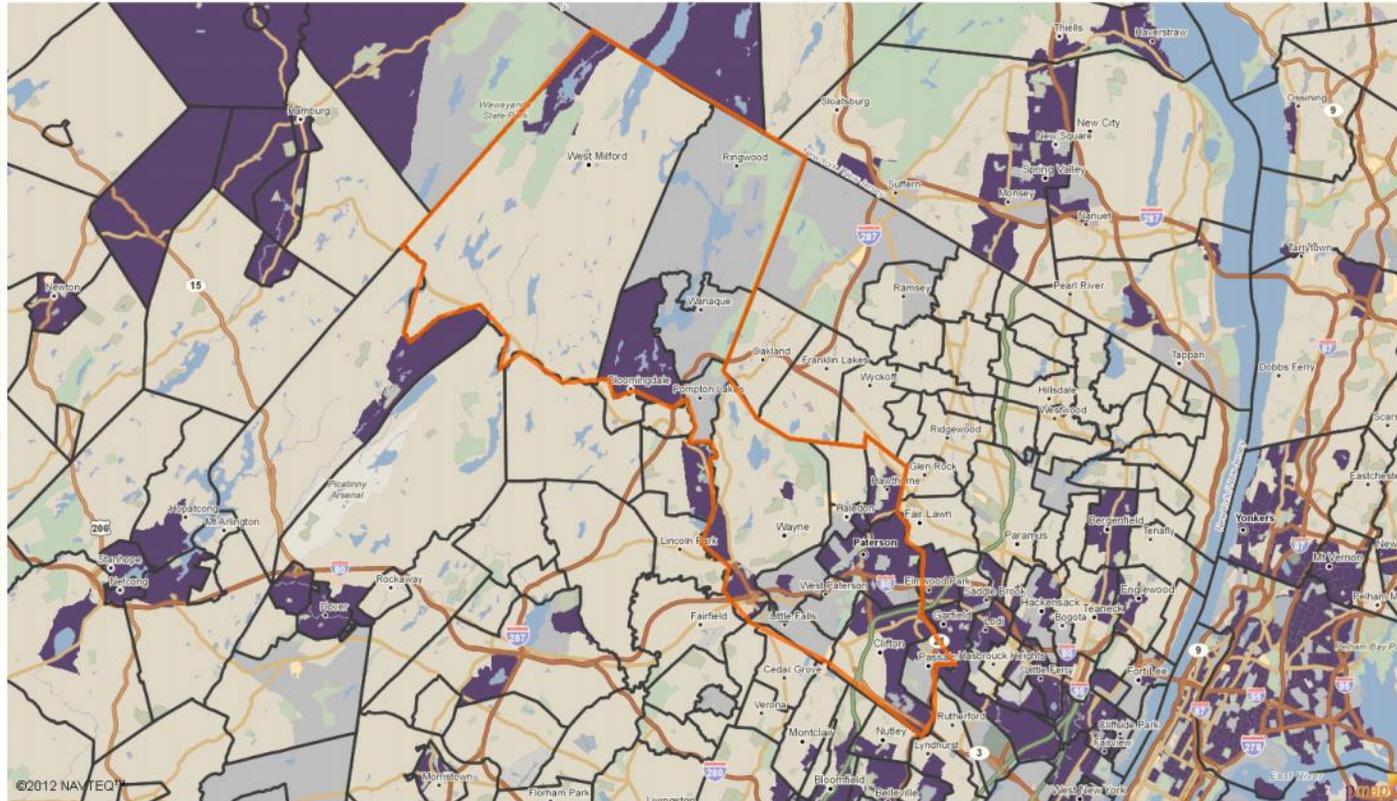


### PolicyMap Analytic of Passaic County with African-American Population/Per Capita Income Below 200% of the Poverty Level receiving Food Stamp Benefits

**Data Layer 1**  
Percent of all people who are African American in 2010.  
0% 100%  
Shaded by: Census Tract  
Source: Census

**Data Layer 2**  
Estimated per capita income between 2005-2009.  
\$0 \$33,962  
Shaded by: Census Tract  
Source: Census

**Data Layer 3**  
Percent of population that received Food Stamps in July 2008.  
0.18% 51.1%  
Shaded by: County  
Source: SAIFE & Census Pop Estimates



Purple areas on the map meet all criteria below:  
Data Layer 1: Percent of all people who are African American in 2010. Range: 0% - 100%.  
Data Layer 2: Estimated per capita income between 2005-2009. Range: \$0 - \$33,962.  
Data Layer 3: Percent of population that received Food Stamps in July 2008. Range: 0.18% - 51.1%.



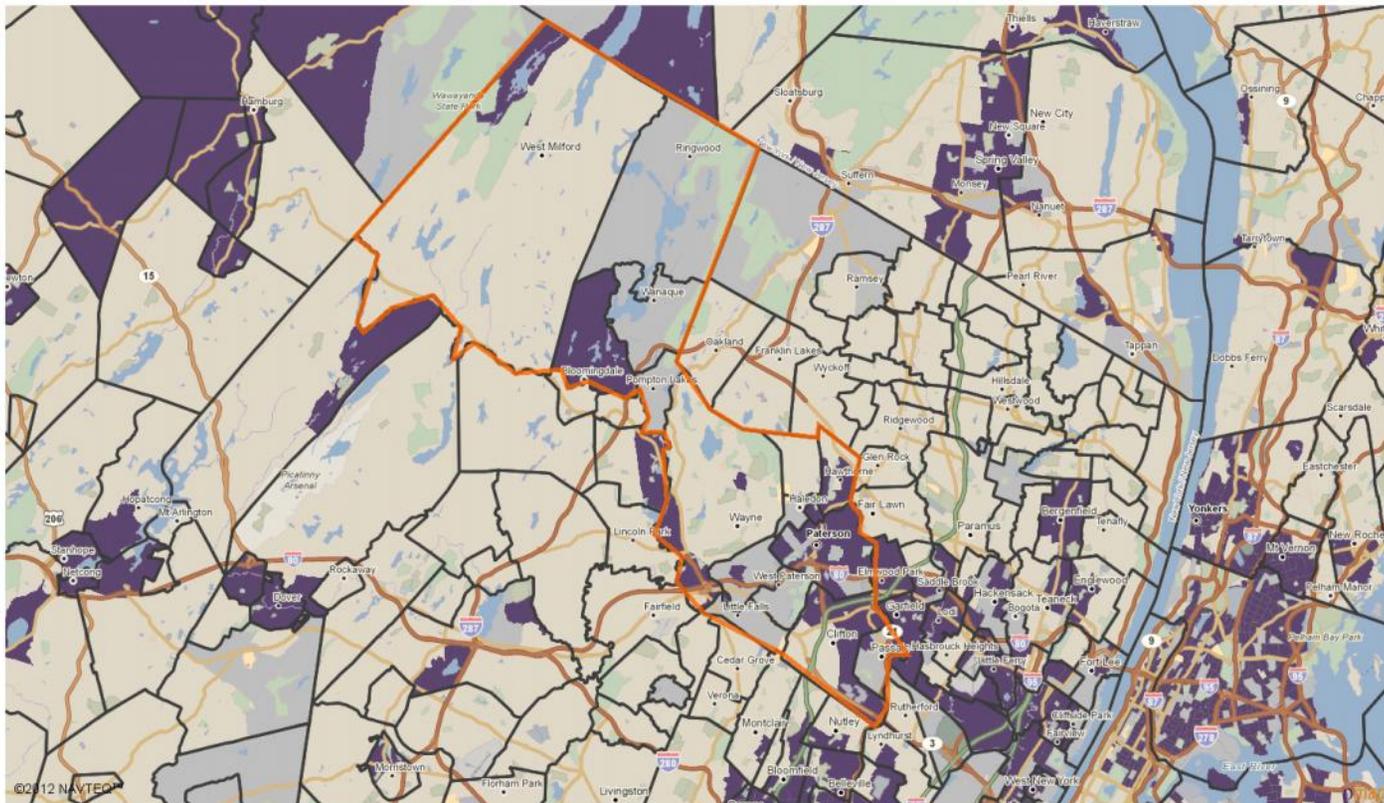


### PolicyMap Analytic of Passaic County with Hispanic Population/Per Capita Income Below 200% of the Poverty Level/Receiving WIC Benefits

**Data Layer 1**  
Percent of all people who are Hispanic in 2010.  
0% 100%  
Shaded by: Census Tract  
Source: Census

**Data Layer 2**  
Estimated per capita income between 2005-2009.  
\$0 \$33,962  
Shaded by: Census Tract  
Source: Census

**Data Layer 3**  
Total WIC redemptions as of 2009.  
\$0 \$341,197,173  
Shaded by: County  
Source: Food Enviro Atlas



Purple areas on the map meet all criteria below:  
Data Layer 1: Percent of all people who are Hispanic in 2010. Range: 0% - 100%.  
Data Layer 2: Estimated per capita income between 2005-2009. Range: \$0 - \$33,962.  
Data Layer 3: Total WIC redemptions as of 2009. Range: \$0 - \$341,197,173.





### PolicyMap Analytic of Passaic County Transit Service with Native American Population and Per Capita Income below 200% of the Poverty Level

**Data Layer 1**

Percent of all people who are American Indian or Alaskan Native in 2010.

▼

0% 100%

Shaded by: Census Tract  
Source: Census

**Data Layer 2**

Estimated per capita income between 2005-2009.

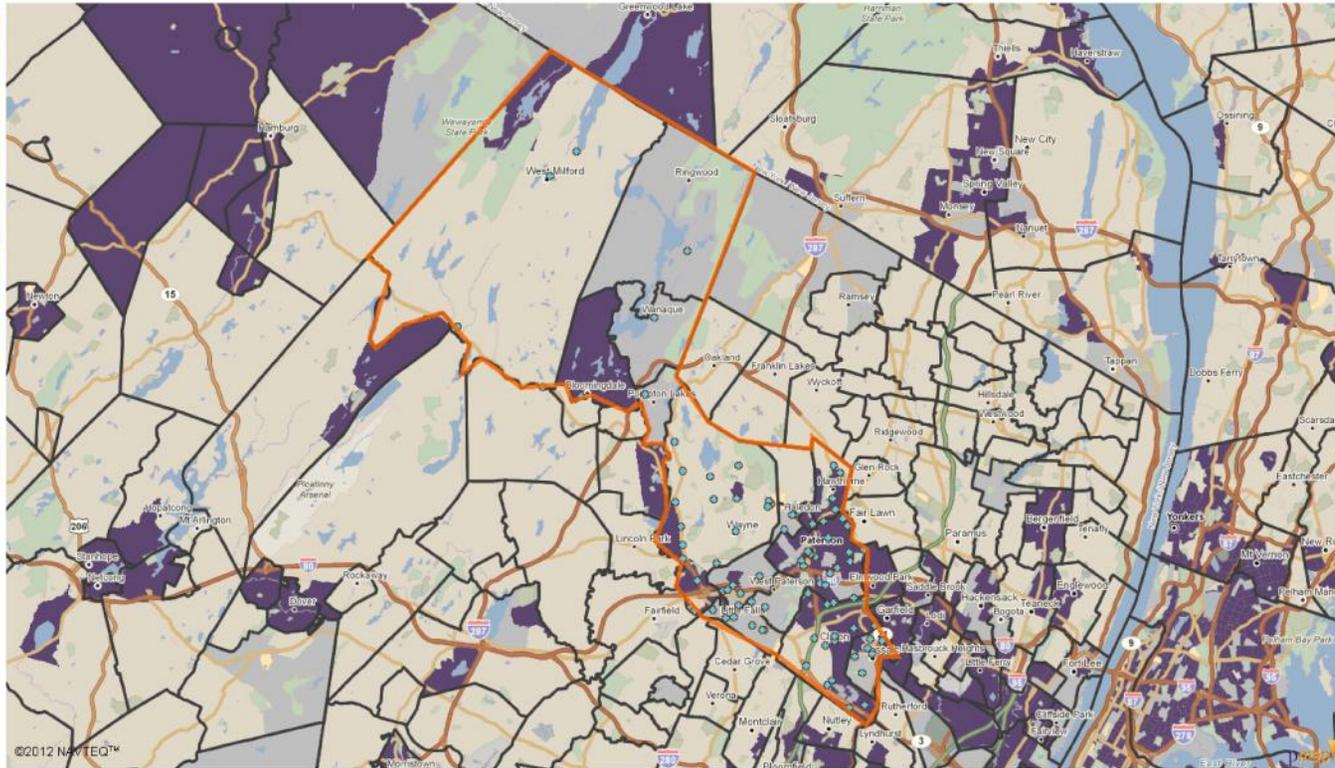
▼

\$0 \$33,962

Shaded by: Census Tract  
Source: Census

**Sites**

- Passaic County Transit Service



Purple areas on the map meet all criteria below  
Data Layer 1: Percent of all people who are American Indian or Alaskan Native in 2010. Range: 0% - 100%.  
Data Layer 2: Estimated per capita income between 2005-2009. Range: \$0 - \$33,962.



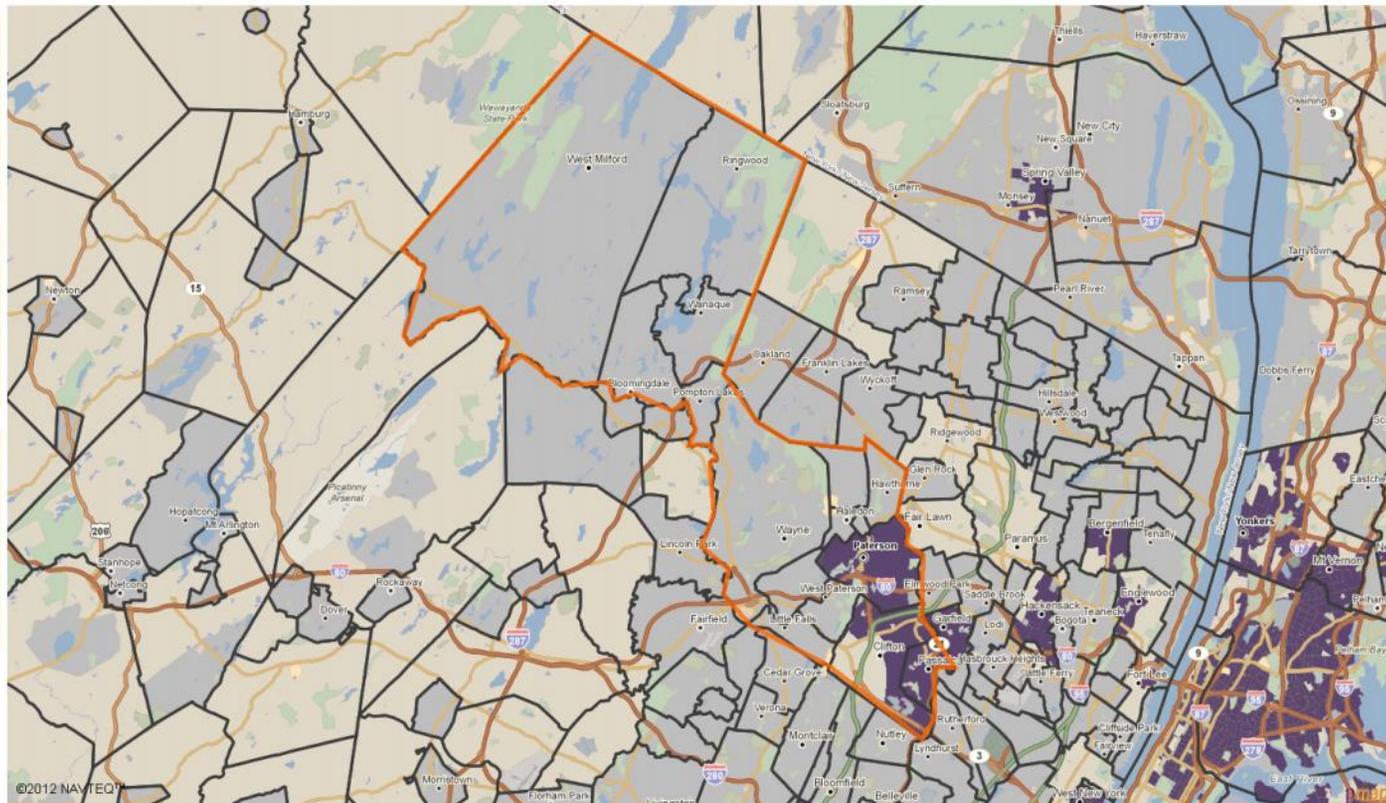


### PolicyMap Analytic of Passaic County Unemployed with Per Capita Income Below 200% of the Poverty Level receiving Food Stamp Benefits

**Data Layer 1**  
Unemployment rate in 2010.  
Range: 2.7% - 37.8%  
Shaded by: City  
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

**Data Layer 2**  
Estimated per capita income between 2005-2009.  
Range: \$0 - \$33,962  
Shaded by: Census Tract  
Source: Census

**Data Layer 3**  
Percent of population that received Food Stamps in July 2008.  
Range: 0.18% - 51.1%  
Shaded by: County  
Source: SAIFE & Census Pop Estimates



Purple areas on the map meet all criteria below:  
Data Layer 1: Unemployment rate in 2010. Range: 2.7% - 37.8%.  
Data Layer 2: Estimated per capita income between 2005-2009. Range: \$0 - \$33,962.  
Data Layer 3: Percent of population that received Food Stamps in July 2008. Range: 0.18% - 51.1%.





### PolicyMap Analytic of Passaic County population with disabilities below 200% of the Poverty Level receiving SSI Benefits

**Data Layer 1**

Percent of all people over 5 who have a disability in 2000.

0% 100%

Shaded by: Census Tract  
Source: Census

**Data Layer 2**

Estimated per capita income between 2005-2009.

\$0 \$33,962

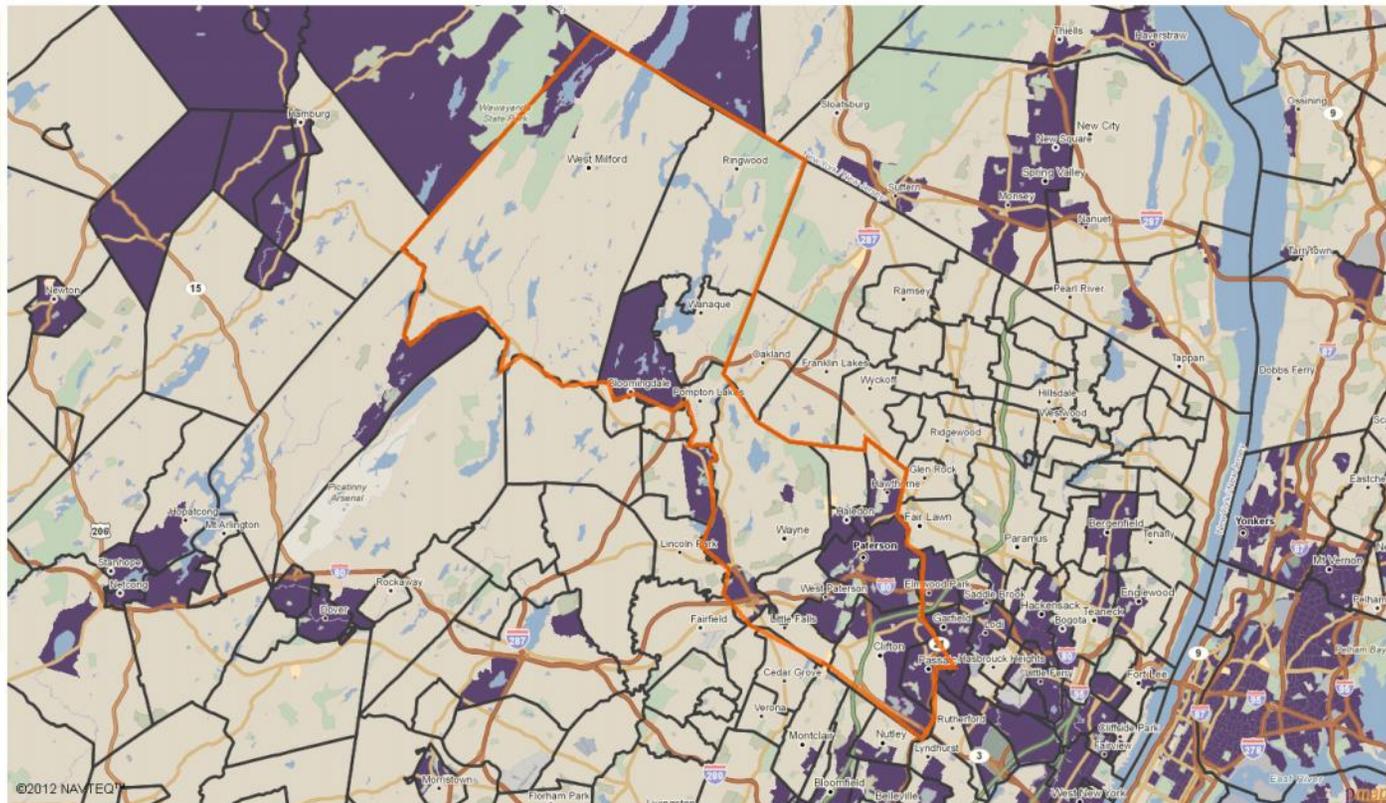
Shaded by: Census Tract  
Source: Census

**Data Layer 3**

Estimated aggregate social security income of a household between 2005-2009.

\$900 \$164,182.80

Shaded by: Census Tract  
Source: Census



Purple areas on the map meet all criteria below.

Data Layer 1: Percent of all people over 5 who have a disability in 2000. Range: 0% - 100%.

Data Layer 2: Estimated per capita income between 2005-2009. Range: \$0 - \$33,962.

Data Layer 3: Estimated aggregate social security income of a household between 2005-2009. Range: \$900 - \$164,182.80.





### PolicyMap Analytic of Passaic County Recent Immigrants Learning English with Per Capita Income Below 200% of the Poverty Level

**Data Layer 1**

Of all people who received green cards in FY2010, the percent residing in each state.

0.04% 19.99%

Shaded by: State  
Source: Department of Homeland Security

**Data Layer 2**

Estimated per capita income between 2005-2009

\$0 \$33,962

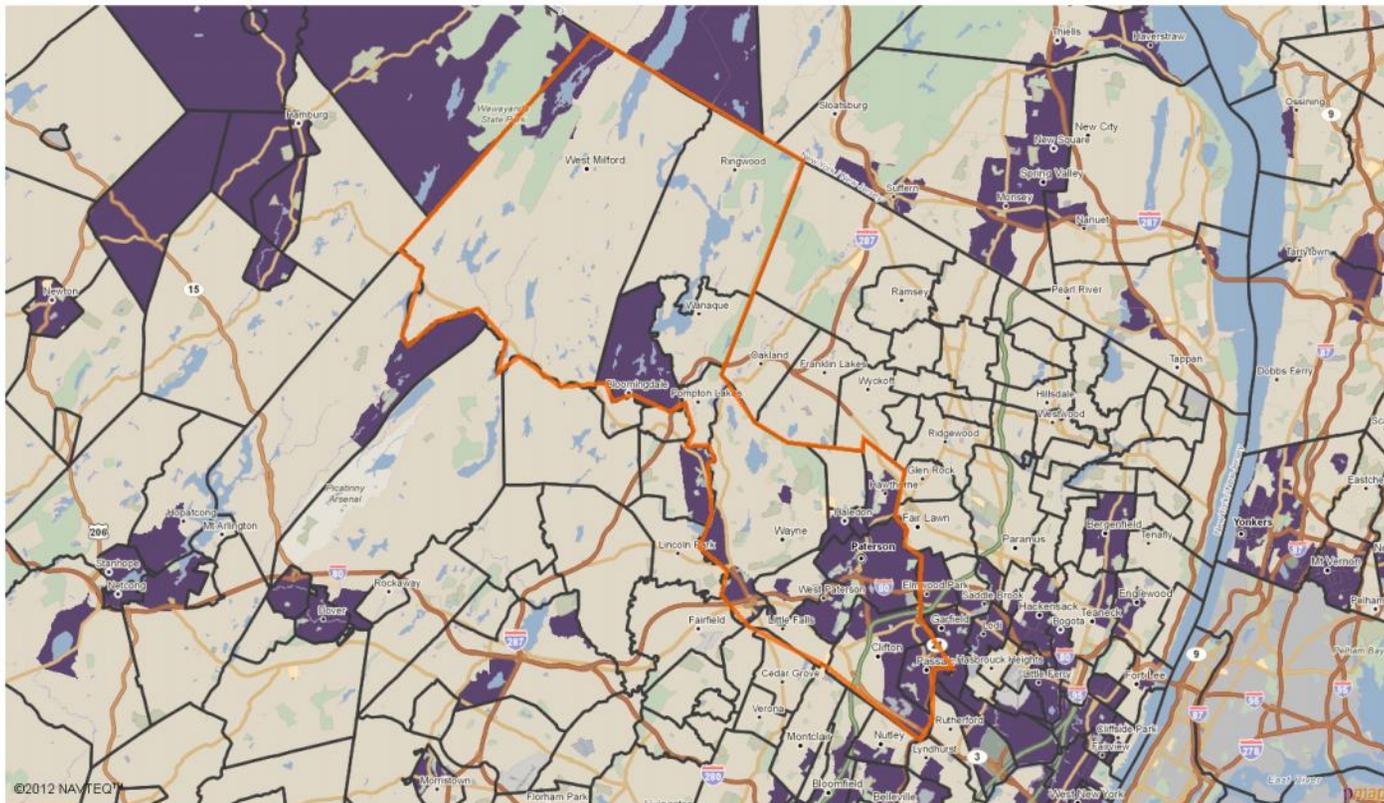
Shaded by: Census Tract  
Source: Census

**Data Layer 3**

Percent of students who were English Language Learners (ELL) in 2009-10.

0% 100%

Shaded by: School District  
Source: NCES CCD



Purple areas on the map meet all criteria below

Data Layer 1: Of all people who received green cards in FY2010, the percent residing in each state. Range: 0.04% - 19.99%.

Data Layer 2: Estimated per capita income between 2005-2009. Range: \$0 - \$33,962.

Data Layer 3: Percent of students who were English Language Learners (ELL) in 2009-10. Range: 0% - 100%.



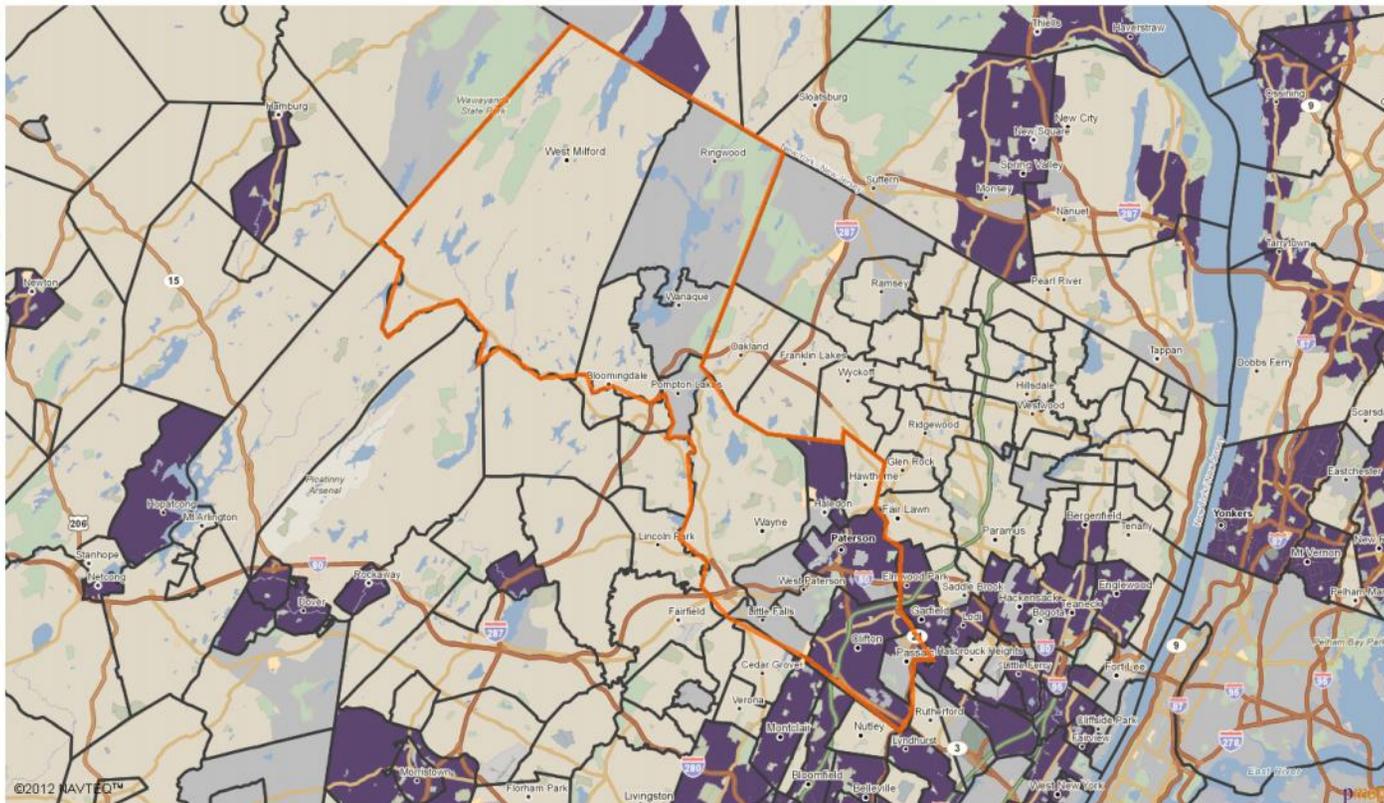


### PolicyMap Analytic of Passaic County Single-Parent Households Receiving WIC Benefits and Free/Reduced-Price School Lunches

**Data Layer 1**  
Percent of all households that are single headed with children in 2010.  
0% - 79.66%  
Shaded by: Census Tract  
Source: Census

**Data Layer 2**  
The percentage of students that are Free and Reduced Price lunch recipients in 2009.  
16.01% - 99.59%  
Shaded by: School District  
Source: NCES CCD

**Data Layer 3**  
Total WIC redemptions as of 2009.  
\$0 - \$341,197,173  
Shaded by: County  
Source: Food Enviro Atlas



Purple areas on the map meet all criteria below:  
Data Layer 1: Percent of all households that are single headed with children in 2010. Range: 0% - 79.66%.  
Data Layer 2: The percentage of students that are Free and Reduced Price lunch recipients in 2009. Range: 16.01% - 99.59%.  
Data Layer 3: Total WIC redemptions as of 2009. Range: \$0 - \$341,197,173.73.





### PolicyMap Analytic of Passaic County Elderly Disabled Living Alone

**Data Layer 1**  
Percent of all people 65 or older in 2010.  
0% 85.65%  
Shaded by: Census Tract  
Source: Census

**Data Layer 2**  
Number of people 65 or older with a disability in 2000.  
0 3,547  
Shaded by: Census Tract  
Source: Census

**Data Layer 3**  
Number of 1-person households in 2010.  
0 5,276  
Shaded by: Census Tract  
Source: Census



Purple areas on the map meet all criteria below:  
Data Layer 1: Percent of all people 65 or older in 2010. Range: 0% - 85.65%.  
Data Layer 2: Number of people 65 or older with a disability in 2000. Range: 0 - 3,547.  
Data Layer 3: Number of 1-person households in 2010. Range: 0 - 5,276.





PolicyMap Analytic of Passaic County Religious Observers Receiving Green Cards in FY2010 Learning English

**Data Layer 1**

Rate of adherence to all denominations per 1,000 people in 2000.

20.15 | 1,861.47

Shaded by: County  
Source: RCMS

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**Data Layer 2**

Of all people who received green cards in FY2010, the percent residing in each state.

0.04% | 19.99%

Shaded by: State  
Source: Department of Homeland Security

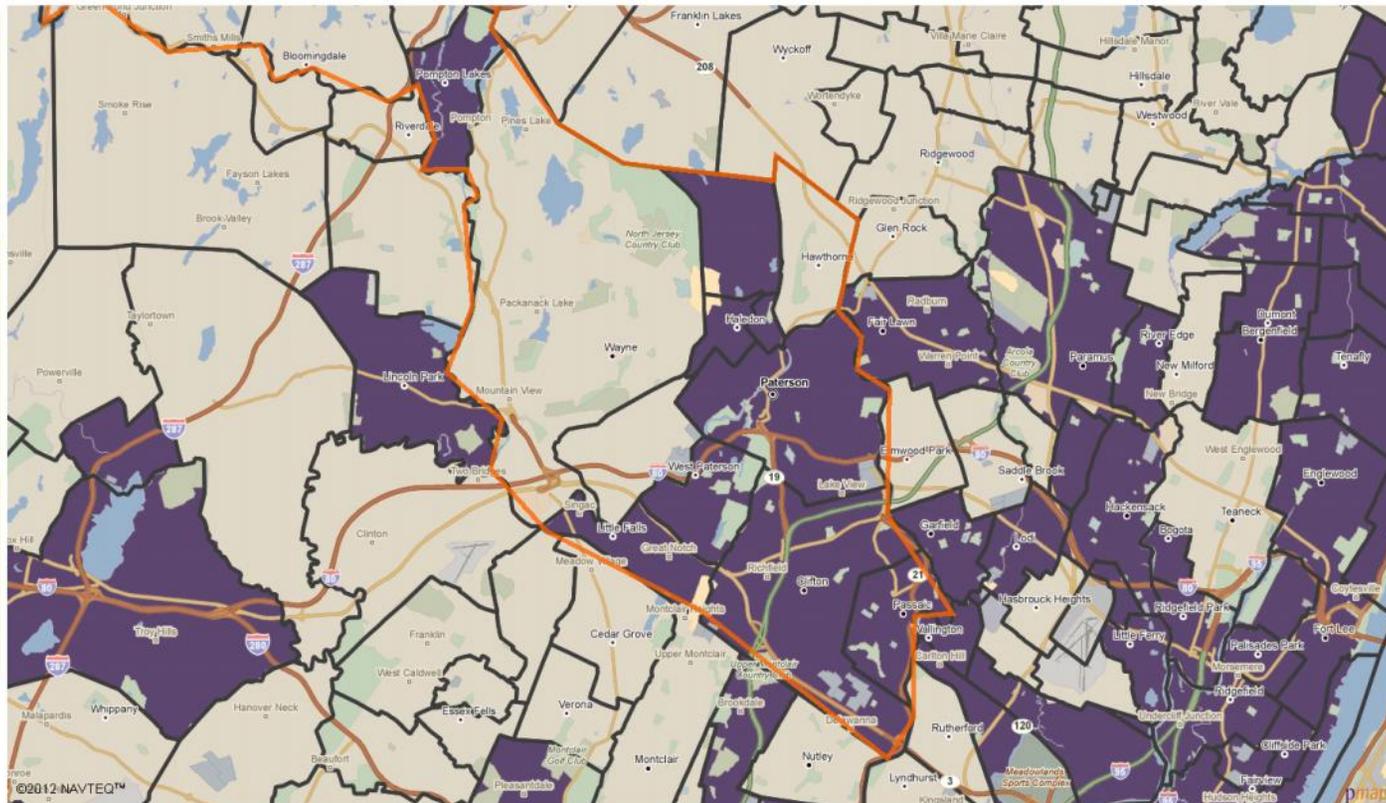
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**Data Layer 3**

Percent of students who were English Language Learners (ELL) in 2009-10.

2.98% | 100%

Shaded by: School District  
Source: NCES CCD



Purple areas on the map meet all criteria below.

Data Layer 1: Rate of adherence to all denominations per 1,000 people in 2000. Range: 20.15 - 1,861.47.

Data Layer 2: Of all people who received green cards in FY2010, the percent residing in each state. Range: 0.04% - 19.99%.

Data Layer 3: Percent of students who were English Language Learners (ELL) in 2009-10. Range: 2.98% - 100%.

