



The Incorporated Village of Hempstead

Celebrating History, Heritage and Legacy

Honorable Don Ryan, Mayor

PERRY PETTUS
Deputy Mayor

LaMONT JOHNSON
Trustee

CHARLES E. RENFROE
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GLADYS RODRIGUEZ
Trustee

PATRICIA PEREZ
Village Clerk

DEBRA URBANO-DiSALVO, Esq.
Village Attorney

RAYMOND J. CALAME
Treasurer

March 2018

Dear Community Resident:

The Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative (ESPRI) was launched by New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo as an effort to reduce financial hardship in 16 high poverty communities across the state. The Village of Hempstead was the only community selected to participate on Long Island.

Phase I of ESPRI began one year ago and focused on assembling a plan for reducing financial hardship in the Village of Hempstead. A major portion of the planning phase included robust community outreach. This process was guided by a Steering Committee, Task Force and Workgroups comprised of community leaders, not for profit organizations, persons living in financial hardship, consumers, representatives of government, education, health, faith-based and business sectors within the community.

Our community engagement strategy intentionally sought the voices of Village of Hempstead residents experiencing financial hardship. What emerged from this feedback has created new opportunities to bring the community together around common goals of breaking the cycle of poverty and addressing the root causes of poverty.

This report would not have been possible if not for the generosity of time and the commitment to improving the Village of Hempstead on the part of these community members. I am grateful to all who have participated as we move into Phase II of the project which will invite organizations to work together to reach a set of shared goals to reduce poverty to create better coordination of services.

Sincerely,

Don Ryan
Mayor of the Village of Hempstead

ESPRI: Phase I Report

Introduction

The Incorporated Village of Hempstead

The Incorporated Village of Hempstead is located in the Town of Hempstead, Nassau County, New York –between two of the most affluent communities in the US (Garden City Village and Rockville Centre). According to the 2014 US Census American Fact Finder, the population in the Village of Hempstead is 56,435, making it the most populated village in New York. The racial makeup is approximately 46% Black or African American, 43% Hispanic (a growing demographic), and 11% White or other.

Hempstead is just as urban (at least with regard to population density and activity) as any major city. In stark contrast to the surrounding villages in the town and county, it is more densely populated than many American cities. According to the US Census Bureau, the village has a total area of 3.7 square miles, all land. The village of Hempstead differs from the rest of Nassau County as it has a much more urban feel similar to the neighboring Queens, New York.

The median household income in the Village of Hempstead is \$46,675 for a family of 4 compared to Garden City Village (\$157,366), Rockville Centre (\$128,579), Nassau County (\$81,246) and compared to the US average (\$53,889). The Village of Hempstead's poverty rate, based upon 2014 census data is 21.5% which is greater than Nassau County (6%), New York State (15%) and the US average (15.5%). Single mothers in the Village of Hempstead aged 25-34 are the largest demographic group living in poverty.

According to the US Census American Fact Finder, the national graduation rate percentage in 2014 was 81% versus 50% in the Village of Hempstead. The percentage of individuals earning a Bachelor's Degree or higher in the Village of Hempstead is 15% and is substantially below the national average of 30%.

Local Challenges to Lowering Poverty

The typical “poor” resident in the Village of Hempstead struggles to make ends meet. They are generally struggling to pay for basic needs such as: rent, cable TV, cell phone, child care, air conditioning in the summer, heat in the winter, a vehicle to get to work as well as food for the table. Although the average poor household in the Village of Hempstead may have many modern conveniences they face severe hardship in finding pathways to achieve financial stability.

A community survey distributed to 562 residents impacted by poverty revealed that 39% rent an apartment, 18% live with a family or roommate, 17% own a home, 16% rent a room, 6% live on the street and 4% live in a shelter.

Agency Overview

United Way of Long Island is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt not-for-profit organization founded in 1964. The agency addresses critical challenges in the areas of education, financial stability and health by connecting local people in need with evidence-based programs, strategic funding investments, community initiatives, volunteer support and community leadership to direct resources to solve problems.

United Way of Long Island has a long history in combatting poverty across the region. Through the Village of Hempstead Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative (ESPRI), United Way of Long Island serves as a facilitator to bring together multiple agencies, organizations and community members to address poverty in the community. United Way of Long Island has an intimate understanding of the conditions that would need to be met in order to achieve the goals of the ESPRI and we are committed to undertaking a strength-based approach to implementation that builds on current community assets and leverages existing resources.

Formation of the Task Force

United Way of Long Island began by working with the mayor's office to create a Steering Committee to manage the general course and guide the planning process of the Village of Hempstead ESPRI. The Steering Committee is comprised of senior level stakeholders from the community as well as agencies serving those in poverty. Steering Committee members may also be members of the various workgroups. The Steering Committee consists of the Chairs of each Workgroup of the Taskforce as well as a representative from the Mayor's office. The composition of the Steering Committee was decided by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and United Way of Long Island's President & CEO.

To combat extreme poverty, reduce inequality and coordinate services in the Village of Hempstead, it was decided that the Steering Committee would assemble a coalition of individuals from an array of professions, experts and volunteers to represent the Task Force. The Task Force is comprised of the following groups: community leaders and members impacted by poverty, government, department of labor, department of social services, school district, not-for-profit organizations, faith-based community, businesses, organized labor, economic development organizations, public safety officials, and health services providers. The composition of the Task Force, other than the Community Advocates, were selected by the Steering Committee. Community Advocates, those living in poverty, were mostly recruited through outreach made at agencies, places of worship, town halls, listening sessions, word-of-mouth and by social media.

Organizations and individuals were selected to serve on the Task Force based on extensive community engagement during the summer and fall of 2016 and their willingness to be part of a poverty reduction initiative that is collaborative, community-driven, person-centered, data-informed and evidence-based in nature. Together, we called on the entire community to help lift the most vulnerable members out of poverty by addressing the barriers that prevent individuals and families from moving toward economic stability.

- **Representing the Village of Hempstead & Elected Officials**

*Don Ryan – Village of Hempstead, Mayor
Siela A. Bynoe - Nassau County Legislature, Legislator
*Dr. David B. Gates - Village of Hempstead, Chief of Staff
Juanita Hargwood - Village of Hempstead, Director of Human Relations
Russell Harris – Village of Hempstead Police Department, Officer
Michael McGowan – Village of Hempstead Police Department, Chief
*Rosemary Olsen – Village of Hempstead Housing Authority, Executive Director
Perry Pettus - Village of Hempstead, Deputy Mayor
*Charlene Thompson – Village of Hempstead CDA, Commissioner

- **Government Agencies**

Dana Boylan - Nassau County District Attorney, Director of Community Re-entry
Shelley Brazley - Nassau County Office of Minority Affairs, Executive Director
Andrea Gatewood - Nassau County Department of Health, WIC Director
Ana-Maria Hurtado Commissioner – Hempstead Works WBD, Director
John Imhof - Nassau County Department of Social Services, Commissioner
Gregory May - Nassau County, Commissioner Taxi & Limousine
*Carolyn McCummings, MPH – N.C. Dept. of Health, Dir. Social Health & Min. Health
* Kyle Rose-Louder – Nassau County District Attorney, Deputy Executive ADA
*Aleisha Garvin - Nassau County Probation Department, Probation Supervisor
Victoria Roberts – Nassau County, Re-Entry Program Coordinator
Madeline Singas - Nassau County District Attorney

- **School District & BOCES**

*James Clark - Hempstead Union Free School, District Assistant Superintendent
*Michele Cohen - Nassau BOCES, Nassau, Assistant Principal

- **Non-profit Organizations**

Sol Marie Alfonso-Jones - Long Island Community Foundation, Sr. Pgm. Officer
Erika Anthony - Nassau County Probation, Juvenile Detention Alternatives Coord.
Jan Barbieri – Child Care Council of Nassau, Executive Director
Evangelist Reginald Benjamin- ABBA, Executive Director
Lawrence Bernstein - Lawrence Foundation, Executive Director
Roger Clayman – Long Island Federation of Labor AFL-CIO, Executive Director
*Nancy Copperman - Northwell Health, Assistant Vice President
Elise Damas - Central American Refugee Center, Program Director
Claire Deroche - Unitarian Church, Social Justice Coordinator
John Durso - Long Island Federation of Labor AFL-CIO, President
Rosalie Drago - Workforce Development Institute, Director
Lance W. Elder - EAC Network, President & CEO
*Don Friedman - Empire Justice Center at Touro Law School, Managing Attorney
Diane M. Gaines - The Woman’s Opportunity Rehabilitation Center, Executive Director

Greta Guarton - Long Island Coalition for the Homeless, Executive Director
 Martine Hackett - Ph.D. - Hofstra University, Assistant Professor
 Iris A. Johnson - EOC Nassau, Chief Executive Officer
 Patricia Johnson - Community Development Corporation of L.I., VP Real Estate
 Jean Kelly - The INN, Executive Director
 Lawrence Levy - Hofstra University, Executive Dean at Ntl. Cntr. for Suburban Studies
 David Nemiroff - Long Island Federally Qualified Health Center, Executive Director
 Gwen O'Shea, Community Development Corporation of L.I., CEO
 Victoria Osk - Nassau-Suffolk Law Services, Managing Attorney
 Lynda Parmely - Hagedorn Foundation, Program Director
 Donna Raphael – Family & Children Association, Director of Youth Services
 Erica Rechner - Opportunities Long Island - Executive Director
 Jeffrey Reynolds - Family and Children's Association, President & CEO
 Lucas Sanchez - NY Communities for Change, Long Island Director
 John Sarno – NADAP, Senior Vocational Manager
 Gladys Serrano - Hispanic Counseling Center, CEO
 *George Siberón - Hempstead Hispanic Civic Association, Executive Director

- **Business Community, Economic Development & Transportation**

Lorraine Aycock - Bank of America, SVP Market Manager & Community Engagement
 Reynaldo Cusicanqui – Consulting Project, Forensic Mitigation Specialist
 Jeanique Druses - JP Morgan Chase & Co., Vice President Relationship Manager
 *Pat Edwards - Citi, Director of Community Relations
 Hector Garcia - Long Island Rail Road, Government & Community Affairs
 *Dennis Jones - Hempstead Chamber of Commerce, President
 Arthur G. Krauer - Conifer, LLC, Developer
 Diane Lalenti - Nassau Inter-County Express, Director of Human Resources
 Cara Longworth – Empire State Development/LIREDC, Long Island Regional Director
 Steven Lindo - President- Springboard Incubator
 Brandon V. Ray - Regional Director- AT&T, Director of External Affairs - Long Island
 *Robert Suarez - Bethpage Federal Credit Union, Assistant Vice President
 Denise Zani - Empire State Development/LIREDC, Deputy Director

- **Faith Based**

Rev. David, Anglada – The Lutheran Church of the Epiphany, Pastor
 Reverend James Byrd - Kingdom Church, Pastor
 Jimmy Perez - Nassau County Hispanic Clergy Liaison
 Father Luis Miguel Romero
 Rev. Sedgwick V. Easley – The Union Baptist Church, Pastor
 Rev. Philip Elliot – Antioch Baptist Church, Pastor
 Rev. Phillip McDowell - South Hempstead Baptist Church, Pastor

Note: There are over fifty religious institutions located in the Village of Hempstead

- **Community Advisory Council – includes individuals impacted by poverty**

Abner Alvarenga	Mynita Atkinson	Carmen Ayala
Keria Blue	Lynette Butler	Robert Colbert
Elise Damas	Kassinda Ellis	Shatora Goskin
Diana Houchen	Ilanye Longjohn	Carolyn McCummings
Miles Merritt	Roger Miller	Ibiene Minah
Marcellus Morris	Barbara Powell	Caprice Rines
*Tina Shuford	Regis Thompson	Curtis Watts
Donald Wilson		

- **Residents Attending Workgroup Meetings – includes individuals impacted by poverty**

Pauline Ceballus	Barbara Chamikea	Carmela Henry
Remy Hannibal	Bradley Hinton	Ron Holmes
Corinne Hinckson	Madona Cole-Lacy	Linsdale McKenzie
Lakeisha Mcnair	Ronald Norman	Lindell Ray
John Sanders	Harris Tracey	*Tina Shuford
Felisa Wath		

Note: names denoted with * are on the Steering Committee.

Governance Structure

The Steering Committee provided leadership, strategic direction and oversight of the Village of Hempstead ESPRI Task Force. The Steering Committee appointed workgroups, co-chairs and individuals with experience in six key areas: Economic Empowerment, Education, Health & Wellness, Justice, Social Support and Workforce Development. Collectively, the workgroups represented a diverse cross-section of the Village of Hempstead, with the active involvement of more than 150 people in total. The Steering Committee and Task Force met monthly while the Workgroups met as often as necessary to complete their tasks. All meetings were open to the public and notes were made available for public review on the Village of Hempstead ESPRI website at www.VillageofHempsteadESPRI.org

The Task Force included community-wide representation from people affected by poverty to ensure that program implementation and the Village of Hempstead ESPRI’s strategic direction is responsive to those most impacted by local poverty challenges. Workgroups were tasked with identifying assets and barriers (SWOT Analysis) that currently exist in the community, developing recommendations for their specific area of focus, and establishing key success measures. Each workgroup included the active participation of people impacted by poverty to ensure that the voices of those experiencing poverty were heard and given equal influence in the process.

The Village of Hempstead ESPRI merged 17 individual recommendations into a unified plan, identifying common themes and recommending next steps for Phase II implementation work. The 17 recommendations were organized into three common themes, which included:

Employment & Career Readiness; Mentoring; Navigation & Resources with a focus on the following populations: adults, youths, single moms and ex-offenders.

The initiative connected to the Long Island Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) by including staff members from Empire State Development (ESD) as well as members of the REDC's Workgroups to sit on the Village of Hempstead ESPRI Task Force and Workgroups. The goal of their involvement was to re-orient the demarcation between economic development and poverty reduction initiatives and eliminate any double standards. By doing this, we are ensuring that the Village of Hempstead ESPRI is consulting with the local REDC and vice versa. This is an important step in connecting the Village of Hempstead to the regional economy. The Long Island REDC is now consulting with the Village of Hempstead ESPRI when making regional economic development plans and allocating CFA resources.

Planning Process

The Process

- The Steering Committee set the direction and is in the process of selecting program ideas for implementation. There will be a Request for Proposals process (February 2018) which will evaluate proposals.
- The Task Force reviewed all materials and vetted programs for implementation and ensured that all recommendations were compiled in a standardized structure and format.
- The Workgroups collected data, researched programs, provided any needed refinement to ensure clarity and completeness and suggested recommendations to the Task Force and Steering Committee for final decision making.

Community Engagement

The Village of Hempstead ESPRI involved the efforts and input of nearly 200 people in the region, including more than 150 volunteers on committees and workgroups, more than 1,200 community members, impacted by poverty, who attended town hall meetings, listening sessions, focus groups or participated in surveys.

The Village of Hempstead ESPRI Workgroups (Economic Empowerment, Education, Health & Wellness, Justice, Social Support and Workforce Development) developed 17 recommendations for identifying and addressing the root causes of poverty in the Village of Hempstead as determined by the workgroup participants. Recommendations were developed and prioritized with the objective of achieving a high level of acceptance from persons impacted by poverty. Going forward in Phase II, the Village of Hempstead ESPRI will make targeted investments in these areas to improve the quality, efficiency and reach of services that address poverty in the community.

Workgroup members' efforts began with an orientation session to establish a shared understanding of the Village of Hempstead ESPRI and to obtain an overview of what to expect

when participating in a workgroup. This orientation included training seminars on structural and institutional racism facilitated by Erase Racism. To ensure proper representation, all individuals impacted by poverty who were interested in getting involved in the planning phase were placed on workgroups. Most workgroups had 3 or 4 community advocate members (individuals impacted by poverty).

Workgroup co-chairs established goals and identified examples of barriers to achieving goals that could be applied to each workgroup area. Each workgroup utilized a consistent framework, beginning with a SWOT Analysis. Workgroups used the identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to develop innovative projects to reduce poverty and to find ways to strengthen collaborations and partnerships through the community resources that are already in place. Extensive data provided by the Village of Hempstead as well as the school district, Nassau County DSS, and others were reviewed during the planning phase along with extensive outreach to families and individuals impacted by poverty. The workgroups reviewed and examined evidence-based programs that reduce poverty in other parts of the United States for replication in the Village of Hempstead.

Collectively, the Steering Committee, Taskforce, Workgroups and Community Advisory Council constructed and deployed a needs assessment survey to obtain broad community feedback from 562 people impacted by poverty. The self-reporting survey contained 46 questions ranging from basic demographic information to the tentative projects the workgroups developed and a section to obtain community feedback / harvesting ideas from the minds of community members as an innovative way to reduce poverty. Getting people to share their ideas, perspective, information and thoughts was a primary goal of this effort. The survey was administered at town hall meetings, listening sessions, soup kitchens, places of worship, housing authority, community-based organizations and by door knocking and street outreach. We also incorporated ESPRI social media links and emails about the survey to engage the community.

The focus of the survey questions related to barriers to successfully moving out of poverty in six areas of concentration selected by the Task Force. Members of the Steering Committee, Task Force and Workgroups received a summary of the results which will also be posted on the ESPRI website to be shared with the public. Because of the time involved to complete a survey, a Stop & Shop gift card was provided to each participant. All surveys were entered into Survey Monkey.

In order to obtain more input from the community, a Community Advisory Council (CAC) was created, made up of village residents impacted by poverty. The role of the CAC is to collaborate in the development of the recommendations for the ESPRI, provide feedback as it relates to the activities associated with the project and to grow into a sustainable group that will contribute to the success of the community through collaboration and education.

Social media (Facebook and Twitter) along with our webpage provided another avenue for the community to become aware of poverty reduction activities in the Village of Hempstead.

Workgroups

- Economic Empowerment: 16 members – Co-chair Dennis Jones (President, Hempstead Chamber of Commerce) – Co-chair Robert Suarez (Assistant Vice President, Bethpage Federal Credit Union) – Remy Hannibal (Community Advocate) – Bradley Hinton (Community Advocate) – Ron Holmes (Community Advocate).
- Education: 12 members – Co-chair James Clark (Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Curriculum and Instruction, Hempstead Union Free School District) – Co-chair Michele Cohen (Assistant Principal, Nassau BOCES) – Cynthia Dennis (Community Advocate) – Tina Shuford (Community Advocate).
- Health & Wellness: 11 members – Co-chair Carolyn McCummings, MPH (Director Social Health and Minority Health, Nassau County Department of Health) – Co-chair Nancy Copperman (Assistant Vice President, Northwell Health) – Carmela Henry (Community Advocate) – Corinne Hinckson (Community Advocate) – Lakeisha McNair (Community Advocate) – Lindell Ray (Community Advocate).
- Justice: 13 members – Co-chair Kyle Rose-Louder (Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney) – Co-chair Aleisha Garvin (Probation Supervisor, Nassau County Probation Department) – Ron Holmes (Community Advocate) – Ronald Norman (Community Advocate).
- Social Support: 14 members – Co-chair Don Friedman (Managing Attorney, Empire Justice Center at the Public Advocacy Center) – Co-chair John Imhof (Commissioner, Nassau County Department of Social Services) – Irene Cassagnol (Community Advocate) – Korah Sternburg (Community Advocate).
- Workforce Development: 19 members – Pat Edwards (Vice President, Director of Community Relations, Citi) – Co-chair George Siberon (Executive Director, Hempstead Hispanic Civic Association) – Madona Cole-Lacy (Community Advocate) – Linsdale McKenzie (Community Advocate) – Felisa Wath (Community Advocate) – Pat Barrow (Community Advocate).

Note: Workgroup members only include names of Co-chairs and Community Advocates.

Grant Funds

Grant funds were used to support the planning process and were allocated as detailed below:

- Project management to execute the strategic direction of the project, develop and implement community engagement activities and survey development.
- Planning coordinator to implement key communication strategies and reports, outcome measurement, data collection/input, outreach to service providers, update 211 directory.
- Hofstra University to assemble community engagement report.
- Erase Racism to facilitate institutional and structural racism workshops.
- Website development.
- Gift cards to support the general public's participation in surveys.
- Support in developing a Request for Proposals.
- Meals for meetings (town halls, task force, workgroups, community advisory council).
- Rental space for the ESPRI office in the Village of Hempstead.
- Community canvassers and consultant fees.
- Office equipment, business supplies and cell phone use.
- Out of area travel to conferences and local mileage reimbursement.
- Fringe benefits.

Leveraging

- Between January 2017 and March 2017, United Way of Long Island through Project Warmth, provided emergency home heating payments (\$32,070) to 81 low-income families in the Village of Hempstead (this included 159 adults with 216 children). The program provided grants for payments (average amount was \$395 per household) to oil and utility companies for families facing heating emergencies. For the families we helped, assistance with an oil delivery, natural gas or electricity payment meant they had room in their budgets to cover basic needs, like food or medication.
- In partnership with the Long Island Nets, United Way of Long Island donated over 25 boxes of school supplies to the Hempstead School District and the Academy Charter School.
- United Way of Long Island leveraged a philanthropic relationship with Wells Fargo Foundation and Concern for Independent Living to award a \$20,000 grant to ABBA Leadership, a vocational trainer, located in the Village of Hempstead. A 60+ hour community-based construction training program was provided to 17 ex-offenders to help them obtain important skills needed for employment. A graduation ceremony was held in November 2017 and was attended by many employers interested in hiring the trainees.

- For Thanksgiving, the Community Advisory Council along with the school district and local businesses fed over 40 families with children.
- Throughout the year, in partnership with NICE Bus, United Way of Long Island distributed over 1,000 metro cards to local churches, non-profits, Nassau Community College for individuals who rely on public transportation.
- United Way of Long Island conducted two community health listening sessions in the Village of Hempstead, with a \$10,000 grant provided by NYS Department of Health - Office of Minority Health & Disparities to assess health care needs and make recommendations to the State. A total of 267 individuals impacted by poverty attended the listening sessions and provided key information about health disparities in the Village of Hempstead.

Area of Focus

How the Task Force Arrived at the Selected Priorities

From March 2017 through November 2017, six workgroups in the areas of Economic Empowerment, Education, Health & Wellness, Justice, Social Support and Workforce Development developed recommendations for their specific area of focus. A primary goal was to tackle barriers that would cut across all of these key areas. During December 2017, the Village of Hempstead ESPRI Task Force arrived at the selected priorities by a ranking method presented to them by the Steering Committee. A priority setting matrix was given to the Steering Committee so they could rank and prioritize the 17 primary projects by categorizing the various projects into three main focus areas of concentration:

1. Employment & Career Readiness
2. Youth & Adult Mentoring
3. Navigation & Resources

Representatives from the Community Advisory Council who are community members living in poverty participated in the selection and prioritization process.

Recommendations

Recommendations included an overview, an assessment of impact and outcomes and a variety of models for costs and potential for ongoing sustainability. The top 10 cross-cutting evidence-based recommendations (endorsed by all 6 Workgroups) include the development of:

1. A Community Resource Center connecting individuals to resources and supports.
2. Vocational training programs linked to a business and employment council to help young adults and ex-offenders move to a path of self-sufficiency.
3. A system navigator program to help ex-offenders obtain certificates of relief, disposition, good conduct and good standing linked to a credible messenger program with new social network.
4. After school programs to help students academically, socially and emotionally.
5. Circles USA family mentoring program to break the cycle of poverty.
6. North American Family Institute (NAFI) Youth Program Initiative to provide young people with the necessary tools to stay out of the criminal justice system by developing healthy relationships with law enforcement and civic leaders.
7. Financial literacy program to help individuals manage their finances.
8. Mentoring program to provide students with guidance and support throughout high school with an appreciation for the needs of new arrivals and those with limited English Proficiency (LEP).
9. Community health worker program to connect individuals to healthcare and social services.
10. Project Self-Sufficiency to support and empower low-income individuals and families to improve the quality of life for themselves and their children through comprehensive family stability and personal and economic self-sufficiency.

The Steering Committee, Task Force, Workgroups and Community Advocates have also recommended allocating a portion of Phase II ESPRI funds to the Participatory Budgeting Project (PBP). PBP is a different way to manage public money. It is a democratic process in which community members directly decide how to spend part of a public budget. It enables citizens impacted by poverty to be empowered to make budget decisions that affect their lives. The Steering Committee is recommending that \$50,000 be allocated to PBP.

The Task Force hopes to establish a very intentional poverty reduction initiative that will focus on the working poor and chronically poor to break the cycle of poverty by giving better access to resources, information and improving employment and career training opportunities.

Data Sources

In order to get the best assessment, committees gathered statistical data from the following sources: the US Census, Nassau County DSS, NYS Department of Education, Long Island FQHC, Hempstead Works, NYS Department of Health, and Nassau County DA's Office. We also gathered qualitative data from more than 800 community residents through focus groups, listening sessions and one-on-one meetings. We conducted a community survey of 562 community members who live in poverty or struggle financially. This data helped the Task Force and Steering Committee to arrive to the above recommendations.

Best Practices and Challenges

The Phase I process brought diverse people together and revealed a spirit to lift up and engage the village. The ESPRI program was nimble and effectively handled the transition of staffing representation from the previous administration. The process that we followed ensured that people in poverty were given a voice. We worked to ensure that there were no barriers to their involvement which included meeting community residents "where they gathered," Sunday church, community events, National Night Out and parades. Lastly, we developed trusting relationships with the ministerial alliance and community leaders to make a lasting difference in the community.

Barriers to Self-sufficiency

The Village of Hempstead ESPRI through its Task Force, Workgroups, Listening Sessions, Town Hall meetings and surveys identified the general causes, not merely the symptoms of poverty in the community. The following is an alphabetical list of the key drivers of poverty in the community:

- Access to Quality Healthcare, Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services
- Born into Poverty
- Education Failure
- Fragmented Services & Uncoordinated Navigation for the Poor
- Increase in Cost of Living
- Increase in Cost of Medical Care
- Increase in Single Parent Households

- Infiltration of Gangs & Crime
- Lack of Affordable Housing
- Lack of Prevention Services & Quality Early Childhood Support
- Lack of Trust in Institutions (not believing that change will happen)
- Lack of Vocational Training Programs in High-Growth, High-Demand Sectors
- Less Government Focus on the Poor
- Limited After School & Summer Learning Programs for Children & Youth
- Limited Adult & Youth Mentors
- Limited Communication & Information Sharing
- Stagnant Wages for the Least Skilled
- Teen-age Pregnancy
- The Cycle of Incarceration - Re-entry & Recidivism
- Transportation Challenges to School
- Trauma
- Unskilled Labor Force with Low-paying Jobs & Limited Benefits

Common Themes

Some of the major themes, concerns and challenges that emerged during the planning phase were:

- Access to Information
- Communication
- Incarceration
- Lack of Stable & Affordable Housing (Substandard Housing/Overcrowding)
- Limited Access & Knowledge of Existing Resources
- Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services
- Neighborhood Safety
- Transportation Challenges to School
- Unresolved Trauma

Other Findings Emerging from Planning Process

From the planning phase, we discovered that communication and information sharing is a major issue along with lack of knowledge about services available to residents. Lastly, safety was a major finding as well as lack of trust of institutions.

Plan for Phase II

During Phase II, a Request for Proposals (RFP) process will invite community-based organizations to respond with cross-cutting collaborative programs with quantifiable outcomes to reduce poverty. Proposals will be reviewed by the Steering Committee with Community Advocates having a vote in scoring grant applications. A total of \$1.2 million will be distributed to 501(c)(3) not-for-profit agencies, including \$50,000 which will be allocated to the Participatory Budgeting Project to engage the broader community. Funded programs will be both service delivery and collective impact in nature. Proposals will be required to include targeted outcomes including method or measurement and plans for sustainability.

Timeline 2018

- February and March – RFP developed
- March 28 – RFP made available to community agencies
- April 19 – Deadline for proposal submission
- April 20 to 29 – Review Committee (Steering Committee with Community Advocates) score and rank proposals
- April 30 - Awardees are notified and contracts are executed

The RFP will be structured asking respondents for their best ideas on how to address the three “bucket” areas with a focus on the vetted top 10 cross-cutting evidence-based recommendations. Program implementation will be from May 2018 until April 2019. All agencies receiving an award will be required to have their staff members trained on structural and institutional racism which will be facilitated by Erase Racism. Agencies receiving awards will need to demonstrate how they are working in collaboration with other agencies to make their grant award more impactful for residents. The Planning Coordinator will monitor the progress and outcomes of each funded activity and ensure regular updates are provided to the Steering Committee, Task Force, Workgroups and Community Advocates.