

BUILDING RESILIENCE IN VIRGINIA'S CRATER REGION: COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES FROM HOPEWELL AND PETERSBURG ON CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Executive Summary

In 2022, The Resilience Adaptation Feasibility Tool (The RAFT) began working in the Crater Planning District Commission (Crater PDC) region to engage locality staff, decision makers, and community leaders in the cities of Hopewell and Petersburg in planning for social, economic, and environmental resilience. Community organizations and service providers representing diverse organizations and institutions serving the region were asked a series of questions to elicit information about their experience in the region and their perspectives on resilience. This report provides a summary of that information and is divided into six sections that highlight the challenges, needs, and opportunities as identified by representatives of government, service providers, and community organizations.

The information presented here should not be interpreted as a comprehensive assessment of resilience in Hopewell and Petersburg or the broader Crater region, but rather a compilation of on-the-ground perspectives from individuals representing nonprofits, community organizations, and agencies who work with residents of Hopewell and Petersburg on a daily basis. No attempt has been made to ground-truth or check the accuracy of these comments, in order for them to serve as a window into the gaps and needs of the community from the perspectives of these service providers and organizational leaders. These perspectives, presented without filters, can help inform future resilience planning efforts led by various partners across the region in that they reveal interests and priorities of these on-the-ground organizations and the people

they serve. Some of these perspectives may be seen as surprising or expected, contested or common ground. Some may reveal that initiatives already underway are not well-known or understood by community members, suggesting a need for additional communication and educational outreach. Others may point the way to new initiatives, partnerships, or opportunities that could be considered. While this is neither a definitive nor conclusive report, it offers these perspectives as one additional source of information to support discussion and decision-making with the goal of advancing community resilience.



PHOPs out and about by Fancie Terrell

Introduction

The following report seeks to summarize perspectives of on-the-ground organizational leaders representing diverse organizations and institutions regarding the challenges and opportunities they have experienced through their work while serving community members and residents across the Crater PDC region, with an emphasis on the cities of Hopewell and Petersburg. These perspectives were elicited through a combination of focus groups, interviews, and a survey conducted with community leaders from across the region and led by the Institute for Engagement & Negotiation at the University of Virginia. PhD Candidate, Luke Hamel, led the outreach and qualitative process under the guidance of RAFT Project Manager, Sierra Gladfelter, and IEN Director, Tanya Denckla Cobb, as part of an independent study during the summer of 2022. IEN Student Research Assistants, Sophie Delzell and Cliff Jenkins, provided additional project support, analysis, and report development.

Participants represented diverse organizations and community groups in the region and were asked a series of questions related to histories and strategies of resilience. There were five focus groups, 14 interviews, and seven survey responses that inform this report. A total of 44 individuals representing 38 community service organizations and institutions, listed in Appendix A, were consulted to produce this report. This document is meant to serve as a collective summary of interview, focus group, and survey content that is reflective of participants' experiences. It is not meant to serve as a comprehensive list of issues and perspectives

in the region. This work was conducted as part of The Resilience Adaptation Feasibility Tool (RAFT) process in the Crater PDC region and was not funded externally. More information about The RAFT is available at: <https://raft.ien.virginia.edu>.

"Oftentimes the right people aren't at the table at the right time. People who have the power to make decisions around resources need to be here with a voice of unity and collective wisdom, and not competing agendas."



View North along U.S Route 301 alternate by Famartin, CC-BY-SA-4.0

Challenges and Barriers to Resilience Identified by Community Organizations and Service Providers

Environmental Resilience

- Petersburg and Hopewell both experience heat island effects, with limited tree cover especially in some neighborhoods.
- The heat of the summer and the cold of the winter threaten the wellbeing of the region's homeless population, who lack sufficient access to shelters.
- More cooling stations are needed by residents.
- There are major problems with flooding during storms, for example Bolingbrook and Banks Street in Petersburg. Pipe infrastructure is not designed to handle the loading of recent, stronger rainstorms and wastewater systems often become overwhelmed.
- Hopewell and Petersburg both suffer from flooding due to aging and inadequate drainage systems; water main breaks may lead to 'boil water' warnings and other disruptions.
- The cost to update and maintain drinking and wastewater infrastructure is another issue.
- There is the potential for infighting over water supply access if neighboring counties continue to expand and stress existing supplies from the Appomattox River. Bigger and wealthier counties want to buy out the whole water system and rent it out to the poorest counties.
- Some of the City of Petersburg's parks are in need of maintenance and are sometimes perceived by users as unwelcoming or are not accessible.
- In Hopewell, some parks and amenities are out of the transportation range of lower-income and minority residents.

"I actually do think that, in some ways, Hopewell is highly resilient, but it's an unhealthy resilience mechanism. I think Hopewell is exceptionally good at anticipating uncertainty, adversity, and change."



Downtown marching band by The Lamb Center for Arts and Healing

"[I think we are] exceptionally good at enduring. Adapting is what we struggle with and thriving is where we are lost."

Economic Resilience

- As people moved out of cities after integration in 1969 and took resources with them, new economic needs emerged that were not as obvious before.
- Industries have left Hopewell and Petersburg, taking jobs with them, and remaining industries may not actually employ local residents.
- The region lacks larger employers who could help retain young high school graduates with good careers.
- Unemployment and homelessness are high, and many existing jobs are low-wage and may not fare well with inflation.
- Small businesses struggle in Hopewell and Petersburg and may not get enough traction to remain open.
- In Petersburg, there are conditions of low car ownership and a lack of alternative transportation strategies to get people to services and their jobs.
- Hopewell and Petersburg are in the top ten for eviction rates for small-to-medium size cities in the country. There is an imminent need for shelters and emergency housing.
- There can be tension between redeveloping downtowns and historic buildings while at the same time providing affordable housing to long-time residents and not exacerbating gentrification.
- Nonprofits and local governments are under-resourced and limited in what support they can provide to communities.
- The Cities of Hopewell and Petersburg sometimes compete with each other and compare themselves instead of focusing on their own positive change.
- Departments within the cities often operate in silos with a focus on their budget for one specific task rather than coordinating or collaborating for larger impact.
- The business community feels a void in leadership as city staff and decision makers turn over.

Social Resilience

- Housing insecurity and providing shelter to individuals experiencing homelessness has been a tremendous challenge.
- Food insecurity remains a clear and present problem for many residents, and food banks in the region struggle to recruit enough volunteers as demands increased during the pandemic.
- There are high levels of inequality in the cities, which leads to school segregation based on separation between private and public schools, as well as clear physical divides between communities of different income brackets.
- Getting wi-fi and internet infrastructure into all communities remains an equity concern. Libraries provide a place that makes this possible especially for low-income and rural residents.
- Some youth and families are in need of support but have not been able to connect to services.
- In Hopewell, there has historically been a lack of after-school programs, leading to some children with working parents or single parents being left at home alone.
- The COVID pandemic and associated stress has had significant health impacts, including exacerbating rates of diabetes, hypertension, obesity and mental health issues among the population. In Petersburg, in particular, suicide rates have increased during COVID.
- Hopewell and Petersburg may retain a culture where they compare themselves to each other rather than developing community visions and plans that lead to substantive improvements.
- While many organizations work together to provide services, some residents feel like city governments may not meaningfully engage with the community around certain issues like substance abuse.
- Although many organizations collaborate and direct individuals to each other's services, they can still remain isolated by their own sense of mission.

Historically Excluded and Underserved Populations and Communities

Environmental Resilience

- There are pocket communities across the Crater region, even in wealthy areas, that experience environmental justice issues.
- Pocahontas Island is a community that is at one of the lowest elevations in Petersburg and is a historically Free Black community. It is one of the most impacted parts of the city for sea level rise and flood vulnerability and has also experienced environmental justice issues.

Economic Resilience

- Utility bills are getting higher for many residents due to inflation and high summer heat.
- There is a lack of good jobs and opportunities available to high-schoolers and graduates in Hopewell and Petersburg.
- Railroad tracks create physical and industrial barriers between communities and form pocket neighborhoods with less access to economic, cultural, and social resources.

"It's not an accident that our community is the way it is. It's from systematic racism and the subsequent denial of education and resources. If we start with that from the beginning, it will only have positive impacts for resilience."



Healthy options by Robert Noriega

"We know that the populations who have been excluded are obvious. We live in Petersburg, Virginia and there is a tremendous Black population, and they have been historically excluded in so many ways. [...] The poor are always underserved, there's never too much we can do for them."



Sorority by The Hope Center

Social Resilience

- Low-income residents, African-American residents, Latino communities, non-English-speaking residents, and the area's Asian, and specifically Korean population, have all been identified as underserved.
- Through the Safe Streets and Roads for All Program, almost all of the census tracts in Hopewell and Petersburg have been identified as disadvantaged communities.
- The entire region is underserved in regard to access to healthy foods, with increased distance to healthy options and a prevalence of processed food contributing to high rates of obesity and preventable disease.
- The unhoused and underhoused community continues to be underserved in Petersburg.
- Youth are consistently disconnected from jobs, educational opportunities, and social centers like churches or Parks and Recreation services.
- LGBTQ youth lack resources and support because the discussion of queer issues makes some service providers uncomfortable as they do not feel they are properly educated on the issues or skilled at facilitating difficult conversations.
- Residents suffering from mental illness are underserved.
- Single mothers lack resources and adequate guidance to maintain healthy families.
- In Petersburg, small farmers, and farmers of color in particular, are also underserved.
- In the City of Hopewell, Wards 1, 2, 6, and 7 are particularly underserved.
- A lack of bilingual staff in certain offices and among service providers, means the Hispanic and Spanish-speaking populations do not often receive the programming and resources they need.
- For programming that does exist, many low-income Black community members do not have access to a vehicle or reliable transportation to participate in the event or work full time so are unable to accompany their children to activities.
- There are certain parts of the community where programming has not been offered out of concerns about triggering community members who have experienced historical violence or trauma. Limited staff capacity and budgets also compound this issue as well as a historical lack of trust between residents and the government/service providers.
- Service providers have found that families of color are less likely to share information about their children that potentially have disabilities, because they are afraid that their kids will be kicked out of the program or be discriminated against, highlighting a lack of trust.



Healthy Living Learning Center by Robert Noriega

"There was a group where I lifted concerns of LGBTQIA youth. I brought up having knowledgeable staff and members, and safe spaces for queer and trans youth. My concerns were swept under the rug. I think that, overall, we tend to overlook a lot of that population because it's uncomfortable. They have what it takes to be leaders in these areas."

Resilience Strengths and Assets Identified by Community Organizations and Service Providers

Environmental Resilience

- Hopewell and Petersburg have a lot of parks and green space relative to the total footprint of the cities.
- Hopewell and Petersburg are working to take steps to improve their drainage and stormwater systems, which also protect transportation and transit networks.
- The City of Petersburg's Comprehensive Plan already includes an explicit resilience component.
- Organizations in Petersburg are starting farming programs in the school system to use gardening and food production to increase healthy options and teach entrepreneurship skills.
- Organizations in Hopewell like the Appomattox Regional Library and the Hopewell Recreation and Parks center are open to the homeless, who can come in and get out of hot or cold weather and use the shower facilities.



Beacon Theater, Hopewell, VA by Art Anderson, CC-BY-SA-3.0

Economic Resilience

- The COVID pandemic helped communities see the value of broadband internet and approach it as critical infrastructure at a regional scale.
- CARES Act funding available during the COVID pandemic has allowed the cities to make investments in economic resilience.
- The Cameron Foundation and John Randolph Foundations offer responsive and proactive grant making to meet the needs of the community in Hopewell and Petersburg.
- Funders in Petersburg like the Cameron Foundation and Pathways-VA provide support to other community organizations such as the Petersburg Wellness Consortium and programs for teen pregnancy reduction.
- Some farmers' market vendors in Petersburg will provide free health and wellness items with certain purchases, or double purchases on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program— Electronic Benefits Transfer (SNAP-EBT).
- The City of Petersburg's City Council recently held a Housing Summit to discuss housing challenges and solutions in the city.
- Hopewell High School is partnering with local community colleges to help high-school graduates complete an Associate's Degree program as part of their regular studies.
- People are keen to start new small businesses in Petersburg.

Social Resilience

- Communities are generally small and are able to work together at the regional level and with regional actors, who themselves have good relationships with state-level stakeholders.
- Residents are very good at problem identification, but can struggle with problem solving.
- There's a lot of grit in the community and a strong sense of pride in the hardship that residents have lived through and endured.
- Localities are good at reaching out to regional and state actors when they need help.
- There are many organizations like Downtown Churches United, Beacon Hill Church, Justin J. Heart, and Virginia State Cooperative Extension which are focused on meeting the need for food security in both cities.
- Food banks have also been a critical asset throughout the pandemic.
- Public art initiatives like Hopewell Proud and the teen leadership program Creative Changemakers work to build a sense of community pride through individual and community-scale healing and transformation.
- After-school programs like The WELL (Wisdom, Equity, Love and Laughter), are critical to the continued health of young people in Hopewell.
- Many existing groups in Petersburg already work together, and take a personal interest in the wellbeing of the community.
- The Petersburg church community is strong and engaged.
- The African-American community in Petersburg has always been resilient, especially in cases like Pocahontas Island, where residents have faced major challenges as one of the nation's first Free Black communities.
- The Petersburg Health Department and the Southside Trauma-Informed Community Network invest in the community in Petersburg.
- The community of Hopewell rallies together around sports and has a winning attitude. They have a village mentality of closeness, and they care about the city's children.
- Homeless people in Hopewell take care of each other and share what they have with others on the street.
- Hopewell residents are good at anticipating and enduring uncertainty and adversity.
- Residents who are incarcerated and residents on probation in Hopewell have the opportunity to get sober and reconcile with their families after trauma with the help of the justice system.
- Children's programming at the city level in Hopewell is becoming progressively more adapted to those with disabilities or language barriers.



Downtown activities by Lamb Center for Arts and Healing

"We have a strong group in the community promoting education, promoting dissatisfaction or promoting ideas to the board. They do a great job of getting their point out and attending council meetings, and contacting anybody who wants to talk about it. They do a great job of spreading information, showing up, and making their voice heard."

How Organizations Work Together to Address Resiliency

Environmental Resilience

- Regional Hazard Mitigation Plans, Long-Range Transportation Plans, and environmental plans provide an opportunity for municipalities to cooperate both locally and regionally. Particularly in the recent process to update the Crater PDC and PlanRVA localities' Hazard Mitigation Plan, participation among localities has been positive and productive.
- Organizations partner with the Crater PDC and city governments on park, trail, and greenspace creation spanning multiple municipalities.
- Virginia State University has many faculty invested in the community and community-engaged studies and courses in the region.

Economic Resilience

- The business community in Hopewell partners with community members and outside organizations like the Community Foundation in Richmond.
- Organizations invested in Downtown Petersburg are well-connected, as are food-related nonprofits in the City of Petersburg.
- Local industrial plants have begun teaching short courses about their work in public schools in Hopewell.
- The public high school in Hopewell partners with local community colleges to allow graduating seniors to complete Associate's degrees.

"I found that there is not a lack of resiliency in this community [...] They know the problems. I have never seen a lack of resilience in the communities we serve at all."



Festival fun by Lamb Center for Arts and Healing

Social Resilience

- There are many organizations that provide free or low-cost food to the community, either separately or through networks such as Petersburg Healthy Options Partnerships (PHOPS).
- One Hopewell has worked to address food insecurity issues by taking a pop-up truck, Sam's Mobile Market, and produce from the Hopewell Farmers Market to food deserts across the city.
- In Petersburg, Petersburg Offers Produce has been an initiative to offer fresh food pop-ups and there have been efforts to provide free fridges in the community and public schools.
- Organizations often communicate and coordinate with one another, referring residents in need from one to another to meet their basic needs and get them additional resources.
- Rising Petersburg has been convening groups like the Department of Social Services, pastors, and other community leaders to connect and network on important issues.
- Community members in Hopewell spread information effectively about opportunities and services by word of mouth.
- Petersburg and Hopewell partners closely with the local Police Departments to provide after-school and summer programming and use Youth Task Forces to introduce kids at an early age to officers to help them build positive relationships and trust.
- The City of Petersburg is working with groups to develop a city Youth and Family Master Plan.
- Virginia State University Cooperative Extension has been working with the Cities of Petersburg and Hopewell to conduct a food policy audit and establish food councils.
- Programs like Backpacks for the Homeless provide 80 backpacks a year, filled with necessities, to homeless people in the Hopewell community.

"Resiliency has a lot to do with access and making sure we are able to have these resources connected. We have created the network of hope, so when families are in need, we can point them in the right direction so they can get back on their feet and live the life they so desperately deserve."



Joint VSU UMC by The Hope Center

"When you have many hands lifting it up, it's a much lighter load. Expertise is in the community to develop these systems. WE know how to do it. We need communication between people and the political will to put your own programs aside and work with someone else's program."

Resilience Opportunities Identified by Community Organizations and Service Providers

Environmental Resilience

- Incentives are needed to build, update, and maintain smart, climate-adapted infrastructure. Additionally, information to plan for sea level rise and adapt infrastructure like bridges and septic and drinking water systems for climate-induced hazards is needed.
- Non-profits can work with each other and municipalities to increase the amount of conserved land in the region, maintaining more of it as open space for recreation.
- The Cities of Hopewell and Petersburg would benefit from renewing and replacing sewer and water systems so that they are more resilient to stormwater and heavy rain events.
- Coalitions to improve tree cover within Petersburg could reduce heat and lower utility costs.
- Cities can continue to work to improve the quality and quantity of parks to improve options for healthy outdoor recreation. Ideally, areas that have been traditionally underserved should have access to at least one park within their area.
- Non-profits can work together with municipalities to improve the quality of trails and allow active transportation and commuting.
- The Cities could use local ordinances and Comprehensive Plans to make their communities more walkable and bikeable and attract people because of their cities' livability. Bike lanes, trails, and ride share programs could also be incorporated into transportation planning.
- Connect residents, especially underserved youth with limited recreation options, to the river by leaning into organizations like RV Paddle Sports, Beyond Boundaries, the Parks and Recreation Departments, etc. to develop outdoor recreation and watershed education programs.
- Appropriate and resilient development should be planned in high-risk areas for flooding such as the Bolingbrook area and Pocahontas Island in Petersburg.
- Funding from sources like the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality's Coastal Zone Management Program could serve communities that are not specifically coastal but still facing climate-exacerbated hazards from sea level rise, flooding, etc.
- There is an opportunity to redevelop and revitalize urban brownfields into productive green spaces, including parks and above-ground community gardens, in partnership with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and by leveraging their brownfields grant program.

"One of the most powerful things we can do is address food insecurity."

Economic Resilience

- Build communities that are more economically robust and that don't stand on only one or two industries to support them.
- Creating opportunities for more jobs in the region, helped along by better public transportation, would give communities the chance to do more than just stay afloat.
- The redevelopment and revitalization of downtown corridors and main streets can increase walkability and provide connections to other neighborhoods, businesses, the river, and trails.
- There is a great opportunity to have more worker-developed training for more energy and energy-efficiency jobs in the region.
- Small businesses are needed at the table where economic decisions are being made, with their needs more visible and prioritized.
- Chambers of Commerce and Main Street Programs can work with businesses to help them not only recover from disasters, but prepare in advance and plan for the long-term.
- Major employers are needed in Petersburg to be able to retain local talent and provide good careers.
- Courting Hopewell industries to focus on hiring close to where they are located could keep money in the community and provide careers for local youth.
- Continued support for opportunities and funding could facilitate more high-school youth in successfully obtaining Associate's Degrees.
- Working with the neighboring military base and community at Fort Lee could advance outcomes of resilience.

"Economic resilience would be having a community that is more economically robust, that doesn't stand on one or two industries to support it. That will have a big impact for us. We could increase resilience in the environment with the way the city and local ordinances are behind those items with walkability and sustainability. We're incorporating that into some of the local comprehensive plans."



View along U.S. Route 460 Business by Famartin CC-BY-SA-4.0

"I would like, if we could, to really lift up organizations that are led by Black and Brown people."

Social Resilience

- Accessible grocery stores and healthy food options are needed in the community.
- New shelters are needed year-round to serve the area's homeless population, especially as summer heat increases.
- Leveraging the library system is important in partnerships and programming to provide everyone with internet access, free programming, etc.
- Mentoring is more important than ever. Additional social and cultural outlets and activities are needed for school-age youth in Hopewell.
- A needs assessment city wide of programs that would be valuable or needed by residents would allow more targeted programming, particularly to underserved community members.
- City programming would benefit from additional outreach and marketing to specific minority and underserved populations who are not currently aware of or benefiting from programs.
- Spanish-speaking interpreters, as well as support for translating educational and program materials into Spanish, would increase the accessibility of both city and nonprofit programs.
- There is an opportunity for cities to use mobile recreation vans and do on-site programming in community centers to serve diverse populations.
- In Comprehensive Plan updates, like the City of Petersburg's current process, there are opportunities to engage residents and the community more actively.
- Community organizations would benefit from hiring more staff members of color, and particularly bilingual staff, in order to effectively engage with and meet the needs of minority and underserved residents.
- Addressing intergenerational trauma in families is critical for encouraging better parenting outcomes.
- Effective leadership and continued care are required to keep teen pregnancy rates low, reduce the number of people suffering from obesity, and help connect residents to long-term medical care.
- More resources and help are needed for single mothers, especially Hispanic single mothers, in Hopewell.
- In Petersburg, a dedicated community health educator would be able to help identify and manage underlying issues.
- Invest in and connect with Black and Brown farmers in surrounding rural areas to meet the cities' food security needs.
- Bringing more powerful organizations, residents, and small businesses to the table to talk about community resilience is critical in Hopewell; if the right people aren't at the table, resilience can't move forward.
- Data-driven processes of community feedback and needs assessments are necessary to meaningfully engage with residents and bring up difficult topics in Hopewell.

"I think that we are almost afraid to ask people what they want, because then, when we do we hold ourselves liable to create that style of program and then, when we don't do it, we fail. People don't like to fail. [...] I think that the first part is if some of our leadership team had a different mindset on certain topics, then maybe they wouldn't be so taboo, because we can actually discuss them."

Ideas for Measuring Increased Resilience Identified by Community Organizations and Service Providers

Environmental Resilience

- Amount and growth of green infrastructure within the cities.
- Number of properties impacted by floods and storms and the number able to recover.
- Number of trees and total tree canopy in cities as a measure of resilience to heat.
- Residents' access to public transportation, such as distances between and the number of covered bus shelters.
- Number of residents who do not have access to healthy food (in general and/or before and after a disaster).
- Number of citizens with access to recreation and health-related opportunities.
- Number of invasive plant species would improve ecosystem health.
- Amount of newly conserved lands.

"We have to solve immediate needs, but we also need to lessen these needs over the next 20 years by starting to solve some systemic issues."

Economic Resilience

- Eviction rates and availability of affordable housing options.
- Time to secure permanent housing for an individual experiencing homelessness.
- Number of vacant lots and abandoned properties over time, whether these properties are redeveloped.
- Number of jobs, especially higher-paying jobs or those with benefits.
- Unemployment and poverty rates.
- Walkability and accessibility of groceries, shopping, and jobs.
- Availability of financial resources for single parents.
- Availability of real-world, project-based learning opportunities for high-schoolers.
- Employment opportunities for high-school graduates with Associate's Degrees.



Learning healthy options by Robert Noriega

Social Resilience

- Improved position in state metrics for social, health, and well-being indicators.
- Lower rates of obesity, chronic conditions, and preventable disease.
- Increased rates in car ownership, especially among lower income populations.
- Improved safety statistics, especially in parks, along trails, and in outdoor recreation areas.
- Greater rates of educational attainment, including improved academic test results and the successful transition of high school students into stable jobs, higher education, etc.
- Amount of improved and maintained housing stock.
- Reduced recidivism rate for incarcerated and charged individuals, as well as lower rates of overdoses and violations going to court.
- Lower rates of infant mortality and lower rates of mother death during birth.
- Reduced number of street shootings and increasing the number of people getting into rehab would indicate improved social resilience in Hopewell.
- Amount of funding for evidence-based interventions with individuals and families around domestic violence and child neglect.



Food pantry lines by The Hope Center

"We need leaders to understand that improving resilience is not just a buzzword but could actually improve lives."



Food pantry by The Hope Center

A large, dark teal geometric shape that fills the top half of the page. It has a diagonal line running from the bottom-left corner towards the top-right, creating a triangular effect.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Participating Organizations and Individuals

1. Christopher Wiegard, Appomattox Regional Library System
2. Pastor Michael Moore, Beacon Hill Church
3. Warren J. McCrickard, Boys to Men RVA
4. Valerie Liggins, The Cameron Foundation
5. Reverend Dr. Mary Brennan Thorpe, Christ and Grace Episcopal Church
6. Reginald Tabor, City of Petersburg Department of Economic Development
7. Keke Cody, Commonwealth Catholic Charities
8. Kailey Sweeney, Crater Area Commission on Homelessness
9. Jay Ruffa, Crater Planning District Commission
10. Ron Svejkovsky, Crater Planning District Commission
11. Scott Fisher, Downtown Churches United
12. Danielle Simms, Department of Environmental Quality Piedmont
13. Heather Barrar, Friends of the Lower Appomattox River
14. Jasmine Gore, Hopewell City Council
15. John Partin, Hopewell City Council
16. Charlene Reed, Hopewell Department of Social Services
17. Ryan Ponder, Hopewell Middle School
18. Becky McDonough, Hopewell-Prince George Chamber of Commerce
19. AJ McCage, Hopewell Recreation and Parks
20. Hannah Bell, Hopewell Recreation and Parks
21. Dr. Melody Hackney, Hopewell Superintendent of Schools
22. Karen Brown-Davis, Justin J. Davis Heart Foundation
23. Dr. Eliza Lamb, Lamb Arts and Healing
24. Dulaney Ward, Main Street Petersburg
25. Dr. Cliff Morris, Morris Cardiovascular
26. Jennifer Murphy-James, One Hopewell
27. Jeff Butler, Organization of Churches and Concerned Citizens
28. Ruth Johnson, Organization of Churches and Concerned Citizens
29. Juanita Epps, Pathways-VA
30. Director, Pearl's Pepper Pantry
31. Genevieve Lohr, Petersburg Bureau of Police
32. Monique Lindsey-Howell, Petersburg Department of Health
33. Fancie Terrell, Petersburg Healthy Options Partnerships
34. Lisa Homa, Petersburg Healthy Options Partnerships
35. Robert Noriega, Petersburg Public Library System
36. Theresa Caldwell, Petersburg Wellness Consortium
37. Debbie Jones, Petersburg Wellness Consortium
38. Cheryl Bursch, River Street Market
39. Denise Waff, Riverside Criminal Justice Agency
40. Nathan Burrell, Virginia Outdoors Foundation
41. Dr. Patrice Perry Rivers, Virginia State University Center for Entrepreneurship
42. Dr. Marcus Comer, Virginia State University Cooperative Extension
43. Zoe York, Waukeshaw Development Inc.
44. NaQuetta Mitchell, Women of Endurance

Appendix B: List of Interview and Focus Questions

The following questions were asked of focus group and interview participants, as well as included in the survey to individuals who provided feedback in that format.

Our approach to resilience: A resilient community is one that is able to anticipate, adapt, endure, and thrive in the face of change, uncertainty, and adversity.

1. Given this framework for resilience, how does your organization support resilience in Hopewell, Petersburg, and/or the Crater region? What populations do you serve?
2. What resilience strengths and assets have you observed in the communities in which you work?
3. Given your organization's work in Crater/Hopewell/Petersburg, what people, neighborhoods, and/or populations are identified by your organization as historically excluded and underserved?
4. How does your organization serve these populations? What underserved people are not being served by you or other groups?
5. What strengths, needs, and opportunities in your resilience have been exposed – and for whom? These could range from planning and leadership to infrastructure and health, food, shelter, and wellness. They could be exposed by COVID and/or climate threats, such as storms, flooding, groundwater intrusion into septic tanks, saltwater intrusion into wells, or an extreme heat event that might impact access to critical services?
6. How does your organization work with others to address resilience more comprehensively?
7. What other opportunities has your organization identified for increasing the resilience of people you serve? What ideas have your organization identified as ways to support increasing resilience?
8. How might we know this effort to increase resilience is successful, in terms of specific changes that might be visible or measurable? Are there ways of measuring success that would be helpful? In one year? In five years? In 10 years?
9. What would your organization need for you to be able to continue to stay engaged in ongoing discussions and networking? Would you be interested in your current role/work in participating in the community workshop (January 2023) or local Implementation Teams?
10. Do you have suggestions for others in the Crater/Hopewell/Petersburg region or your community who should be included in The RAFT process in the region?

