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HUDSON VALLEY

# Study finds City of Poughkeepsie residents experience "food insecurity"

By: **Michael Howard** 03/06/2014 06:17 PM

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*According to a recent study released by SUNY New Paltz, more than 20 percent of all city residents experience "food insecurity" or inconsistent access to adequate food. As Time Warner Cable News Reporter Michael Howard tells us, there are plans in the works to tackle the statistic.*

POUGHKEEPSIE, N.Y. -- For city of Poughkeepsie resident Margaret Anson she's always looking for a good deal on groceries. But for the best deals, she's forced to pay an added expense.

"In Price Chopper they sell the meat in a box for so much money so naturally you can't carry that on the bus where a cab is \$7.50," said Anson.

A two year study funded by the USDA and released by SUNY New Paltz found that 26 percent of city of Poughkeepsie households experience "food insecurity", or inconsistent access to adequate food.

"Up until fairly recently there weren't any grocery stores or supermarkets in the city only outside or in the town of Poughkeepsie," said Joshua Simons, a SUNY New Paltz Research Associate.

The reason, researchers say, is the lack of stores that offer healthy food choices at an affordable price. Where transportation issues for city residents are also a concern.

"It's a four bag limit on the bus," said Simon, "and one of the effects of this is that especially people with families who go grocery shopping have to take the bus more than once a week."

Poughkeepsie Mayor John Tkazyik points out the four bag limit is a Department of Transportation safety measure but he says he's been aware of the retail issue for some time.

"The city has been unsuccessful over the years in trying to attract such a market," said Tkazyik.

But the mayor says that has all changed in the last couple of months. As a developer has come forward to purchase the Crannell Street parking lot to build a retail grocery store.

"The city has received an offer for purchase of a portion of that lot for \$90,000 and we hope to be bringing that offer before the common council very shortly," said Tkazyik.

As for Anson she just hopes some type of retail grocery store will end up within the city's downtown.

"They have so many Stop and Shops in Hyde Park and here on 44 then they have another one out on south road, I mean how many of those do you need there?" asked Anson.

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