



Neighborhoods In Bloom

Neighborhood Profiles | 2017

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Neighborhoods in Bloom

Neighborhood Profile Introduction

In 1999, the City of Richmond, Virginia, launched Neighborhoods in Bloom (NiB), an effort to disburse limited funds for neighborhood redevelopment to a target set of seven neighborhoods. This was a significant departure from the City's previous practice of distributing federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funds broadly throughout low- and moderate-income (LMI) neighborhoods. This practice had resulted in a scattered investment effect that did not reach the critical funding mass necessary to stimulate private investment activity in Richmond's LMI neighborhoods. The City of Richmond, responding to internal feedback from planning staff and external feedback from community development corporations, and supported by city leadership, developed the target reinvestment strategy which became known as Neighborhoods in Bloom.

The City used a data-driven, participatory process to identify the target neighborhoods. Based on indicators of neighborhood conditions and revitalization potential, the following five neighborhoods were initially chosen as recipients of the NiB targeted funds:

- Church Hill Central
- Southern Barton Heights
- Highland Park – Southern Tip
- Carver/Newtowne West
- Blackwell

A sixth neighborhood, Jackson Ward, was added, as it ranked equally with Blackwell on neighborhood conditions criteria. The Oregon Hill neighborhood also received some CDBG and HOME funding during the NiB program, though not at the level of the NiB neighborhoods.

Implementation of NiB began in July 1999. The City designated two levels of treatment for the NiB neighborhoods: smaller "impact areas" received CDBG and HOME funds and larger "target areas" received priority for certain public services. These services included focused code enforcement, priority in the tax-delinquent housing sale process, accelerated historical property review, and counseling and replacement housing assistance.

The impact of NiB on the target neighborhoods was measured in a 2005 study entitled "The Impacts of Targeted Public and Nonprofit Investment on Neighborhood Development" (Accordino, Galster and Tatian) that was jointly sponsored by the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond and the Richmond Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC). The study revealed that highly focused reinvestment resulted in accelerated housing price appreciation in the targeted neighborhoods. Housing prices in the NiB areas appreciated 9.9 percent faster per year than the citywide average. Housing prices in areas adjacent to the NiB areas appreciated 5.3 percent faster per year than the citywide average.

The NiB-funded housing activity also directly influenced additional private and for-profit investors and investor-owners to rehabilitate properties in and near the target neighborhoods. Thus, the original 2005 study lent credence to the idea that focused reinvestment can reach a threshold level beyond which the private market can operate without subsidies. In the case of the original NiB program, that threshold was approximately \$20,100 per block in 2005 inflation-adjusted dollars, which equates to approximately \$24,393 per block in 2015 inflation-adjusted dollars.

Since the original evaluation of NiB took place over a decade ago, the Richmond Fed is conducting a retrospective study of the NiB program's long-term effects. These profiles – which trace the evolution of the NiB neighborhoods over the post-NiB decade and examine their current economic and social state – constitute the first phase of this study.

Additional Resources

- https://www.richmondfed.org/publications/community_development/neighborhoods_in_bloom
- <http://www.richmondgov.com/neighborhoods/index.aspx>



Neighborhoods in Bloom

Key Findings

Poverty Rate

From 1999 to 2015, the median family poverty rate among the census tracts containing Neighborhoods in Bloom (NiB) target areas was **seven to eight percentage points higher than the City's** family poverty rate and **increased similarly** (25.1 percent to 26.3 percent and 17.1 percent to 19.3 percent, respectively).

As of 2015, family poverty rates in the census tracts containing the NiB target areas **ranged from zero to 61.5 percent**. In 1999, the family poverty rates in these census tracts ranged from 10.3 to 46.2 percent.

Median Income

From 1999 to 2015, the census tracts containing the NiB target areas on average experienced an **increase in real median family income**, but had a **smaller dollar value median income than the City** (\$38,012 to \$40,074 and \$53,094 to \$50,307, respectively in 2015 dollars).

As of 2015, median family income in the census tracts containing the NiB target areas **ranged from \$14,760 to \$92,031** in 2015 dollars. In 1999, median family income in these census tracts ranged from \$21,871 to \$64,322 in 2015 dollars.

Concentrated Investment

During the original NiB program (FY1999-FY2004), the City invested approximately **\$13.7 million** in total federal grant funding in the NiB target areas.

Approximately **41.3 percent** of the City's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) and Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) funding from FY2006 to FY2014 was allocated to the original NiB target areas.

From 2005 to 2015, the City of Richmond was awarded over **\$77.2 million** in CDBG, HOME and NSP funding.

Sources:

City of Richmond CAPER Reports, FY2006-FY2014.

U.S. Census Bureau 2000 Decennial Census Data.

U.S. Census Bureau 2011-2015 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates.

Property Values

From 1999 to 2015, the census tracts containing the NiB target areas on average had a **smaller dollar value increase in median property value than the City and lagged behind in total dollar value** (\$87,500 to \$140,700 and \$120,900 to \$193,700, respectively in 2015 dollars).

As of 2015, median property values in the census tracts containing the NiB neighborhoods **ranged from \$86,400 to \$222,100**.

Select Neighborhoods

Church Hill Central

Church Hill Central received the **largest amount of City funding** from FY2006 to FY2014 with just under **\$10 million** in combined CDBG, HOME and NSP funding.

Jackson Ward

As of 2015, the census tract containing Jackson Ward had the **highest median property value** of NiB census tracts (\$222,100).

Southern Barton Heights

After FY2007, the City **phased out concentrated investment** in Southern Barton Heights because the NiB program had attracted the desired level of private investment. Public investment **resumed in FY2014** to address economic destabilization post-Great Recession.

Note: Key findings are provided at the census tract level due to data limitations. The U.S. Census Bureau recommends using caution when comparing data from the 2000 decennial census and the 2015 American Community Survey. Additional information can be found [here](#).



BLACKWELL



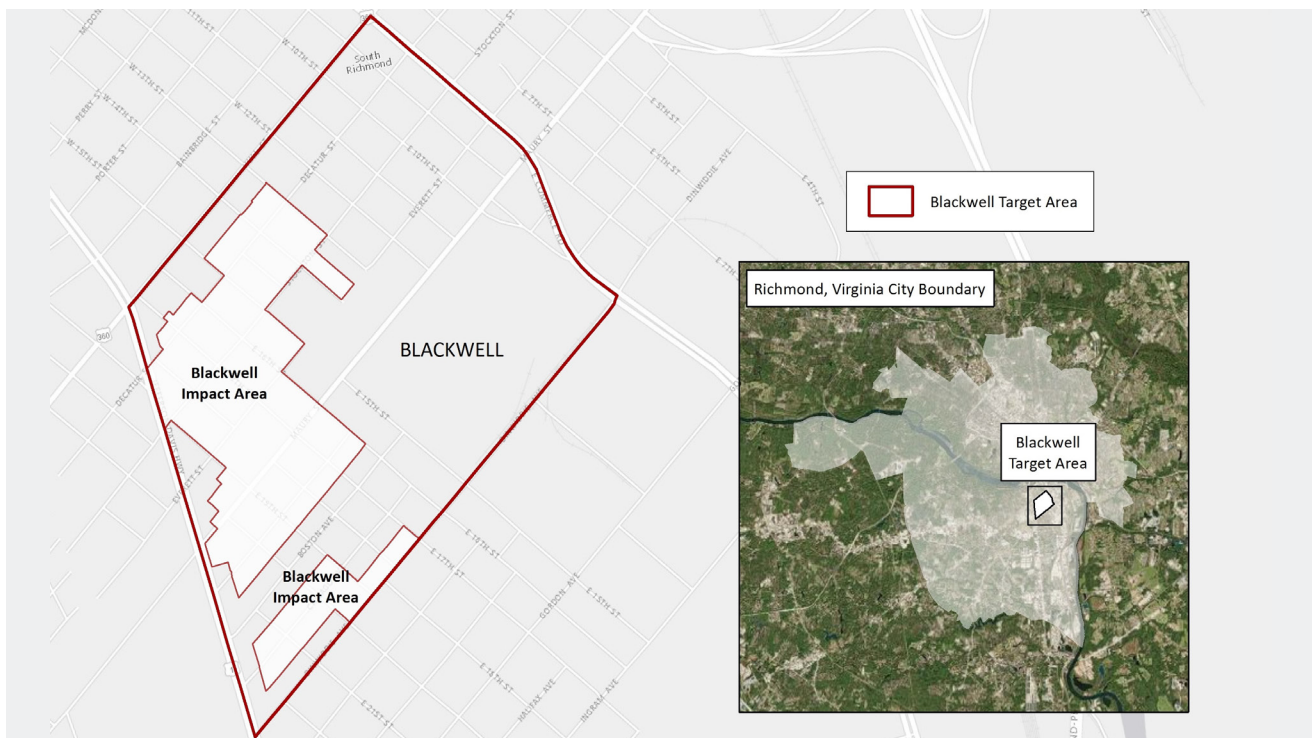
Neighborhoods in Bloom Retrospective

NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY

Approximately one mile south of downtown Richmond is the Neighborhoods in Bloom (NiB) target area of Blackwell. Most of the present-day neighborhood was a part of the old Town of Manchester, established in 1769. It was not until the construction of a new school in 1952—named after African American community leader, school principal and teacher James H. Blackwell – that the surrounding neighborhood known by the same name was formally established.

The area that is now Blackwell was a community formed by Revolutionary War and Civil War manufacturing booms. Affordable housing provided factory workers with living quarters during these industrial expansions. By 1874, the area was home to many African American businesses. The workers and merchants who lived there fostered a strong sense of community. Blackwell’s assorted architecture stems from its dotted history – a varied past of housing construction, demolition and neighborhood renewal.

Map 1: Neighborhoods in Bloom Impact and Target Areas – Blackwell



By the 1960s, Blackwell was experiencing accelerated population loss, despite the growth occurring in nearby neighborhoods. As a result, Blackwell was targeted by the City for redevelopment from the late 1960s to the early 1970s. These revitalization efforts were part of a national, federally funded public housing initiative focused on rehabilitating the housing stock through strict code enforcement, demolition of dilapidated structures, and the construction of new public housing units.¹ This approach, which was experimental at the time, ultimately undermined the neighborhood's stability and intensified its deterioration.

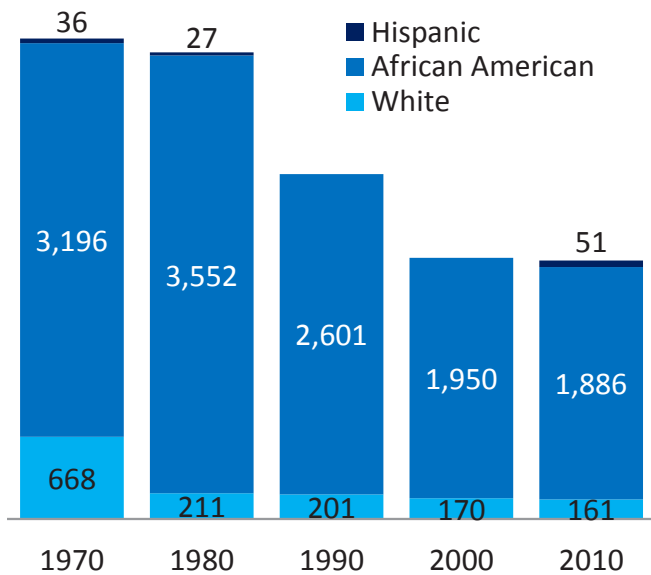
Two years before NiB began in 1999, the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) was awarded \$26.9 million from the U.S. Department of

Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to improve building integrity and physical appearance, introduce management improvements, and develop community services in Blackwell. This project was part of HUD's HOPE VI initiative to revitalize distressed public housing, which was then rolled into the NiB efforts in Blackwell.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHANGE

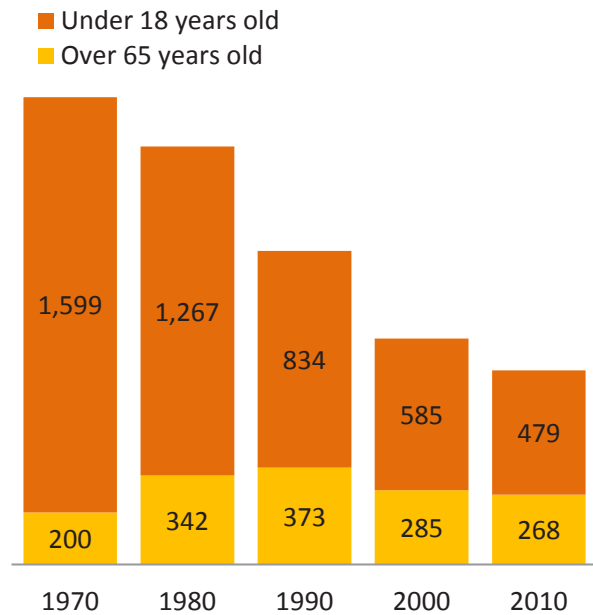
Total population in the census tract surrounding Blackwell decreased by 1,786 residents from 1970 to 2010 (3,864 residents in 1970 compared to 2,078 residents in 2010). The number of African American residents remained relatively consistent from 1970 to 1980, while the number of white residents decreased by half over that time period. As of 2010, 89.9 percent

Figure 1: Racial Composition in Blackwell's Surrounding Census Tract, 1970-2010



Note: Sample only includes individuals who self-identify as one race.
Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

Figure 2: Age Composition in Blackwell's Surrounding Census Tract, 1970-2010



Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

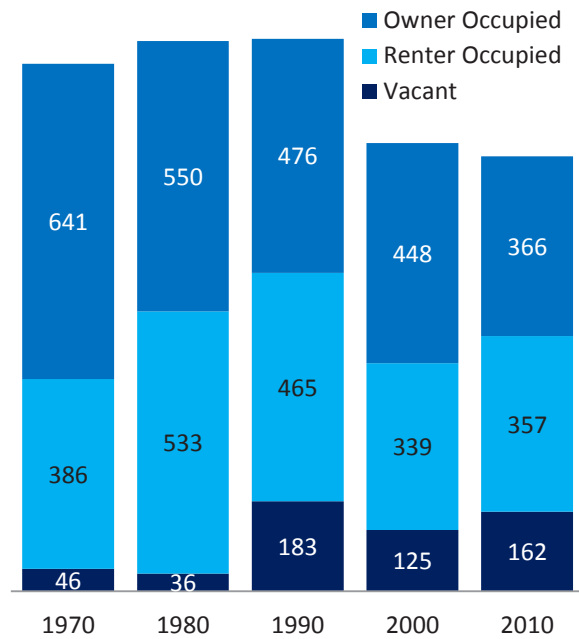
Note: When measuring the investment and impact of NiB in the early 2000s, the City and external researchers defined the Blackwell measurement area as the census tract that contained the Blackwell target area. This profile also uses that definition, and as such, the measurement area includes the following 2010 census tract: 51760060200.



of residents were African American, 7.7 percent were white and 2.4 percent were Hispanic (see Figure 1). The percentage of residents under 18 decreased from 41.4 percent in 1970 to 23.1 percent in 2010 and the percentage over 65 decreased from 13.3 percent in 1990 to 12.9 percent in 2010, (see Figure 2). From 1980 to 2010, there have been approximately equal numbers of owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing units in the census tract containing Blackwell (see Figure 3). Over this time period, the homeownership rate was highest in 1970 at 59.7 percent. Decennial census data indicate that the homeownership rate has fallen more recently, with 41.4 percent of occupants owning their homes in 2010.

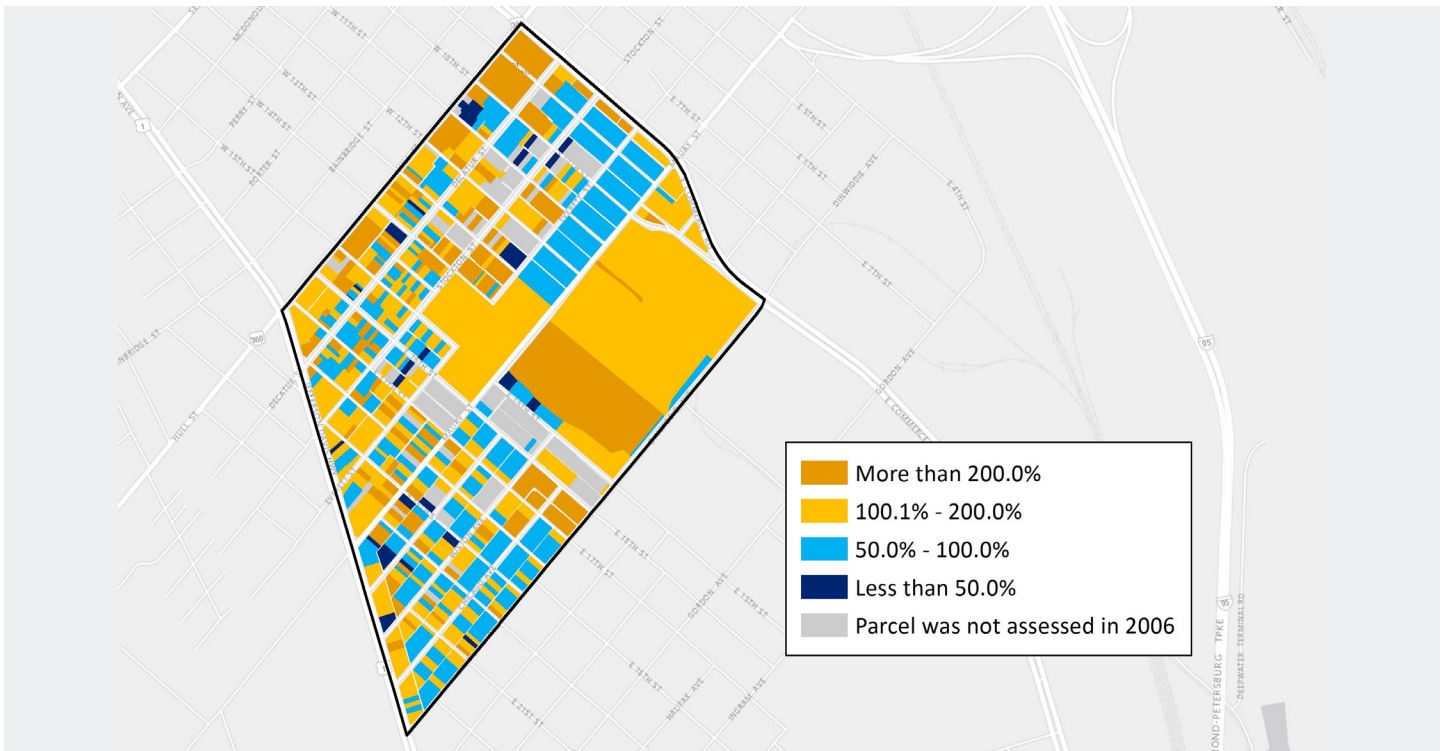
Of the 852 Blackwell residential land parcels that were assessed both in FY2006 — immediately following the official end of the NiB program — and in FY2016, 588 (69.0 percent) experienced an increase in nominal assessment value (see Map 2). Of these, 331 parcels (38.8 percent) more than doubled their 2006 assessed value by 2016. Three parcels (0.4 percent) experienced no change in nominal assessment value over the 10 year time period and 260 parcels (30.5 percent) had a lower nominal dollar value in FY2016 than in FY2006.

Figure 3: Housing Occupancy in Blackwell’s Surrounding Census Tract, 1970-2010



Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

Map 2: 2016 Assessment Value as a Percent of 2006 Assessment Value in Blackwell



Source: City of Richmond Assessment Data, FY2006-FY2016.

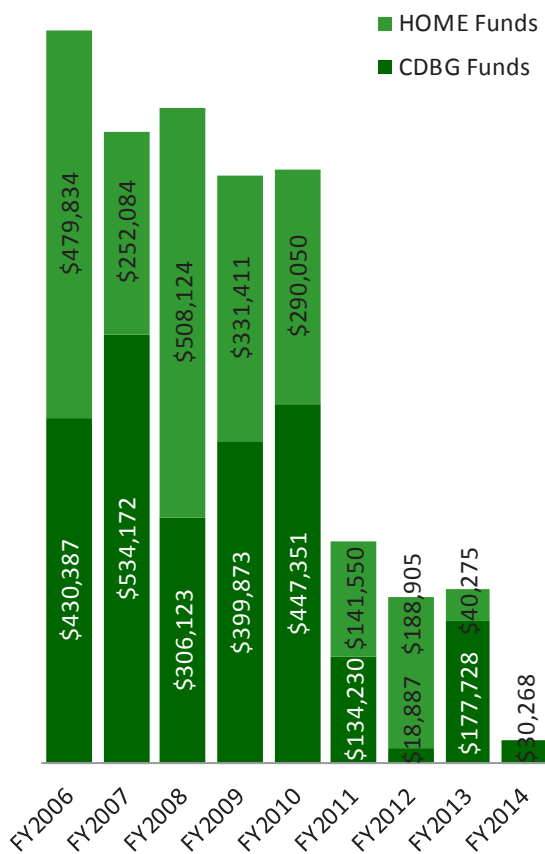


INVESTMENT AFTER NEIGHBORHOODS IN BLOOM

Public Investment

In the years since the end of the NiB program, the City has continued to direct Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funding to Blackwell. Approximately 13.2 percent of the City’s CDBG and HOME funding from FY2006 to FY2014 was spent on Blackwell revitalization efforts. Post-NiB local government investment in Blackwell was highest in FY2006 with a total of approximately \$910,221 and lowest in FY2014 with a total of approximately \$30,268 (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Local Government Investment in Blackwell (FY2006-FY2014)



Source: City of Richmond CAPER Reports, FY2006-FY2014.

Nonprofit Investment

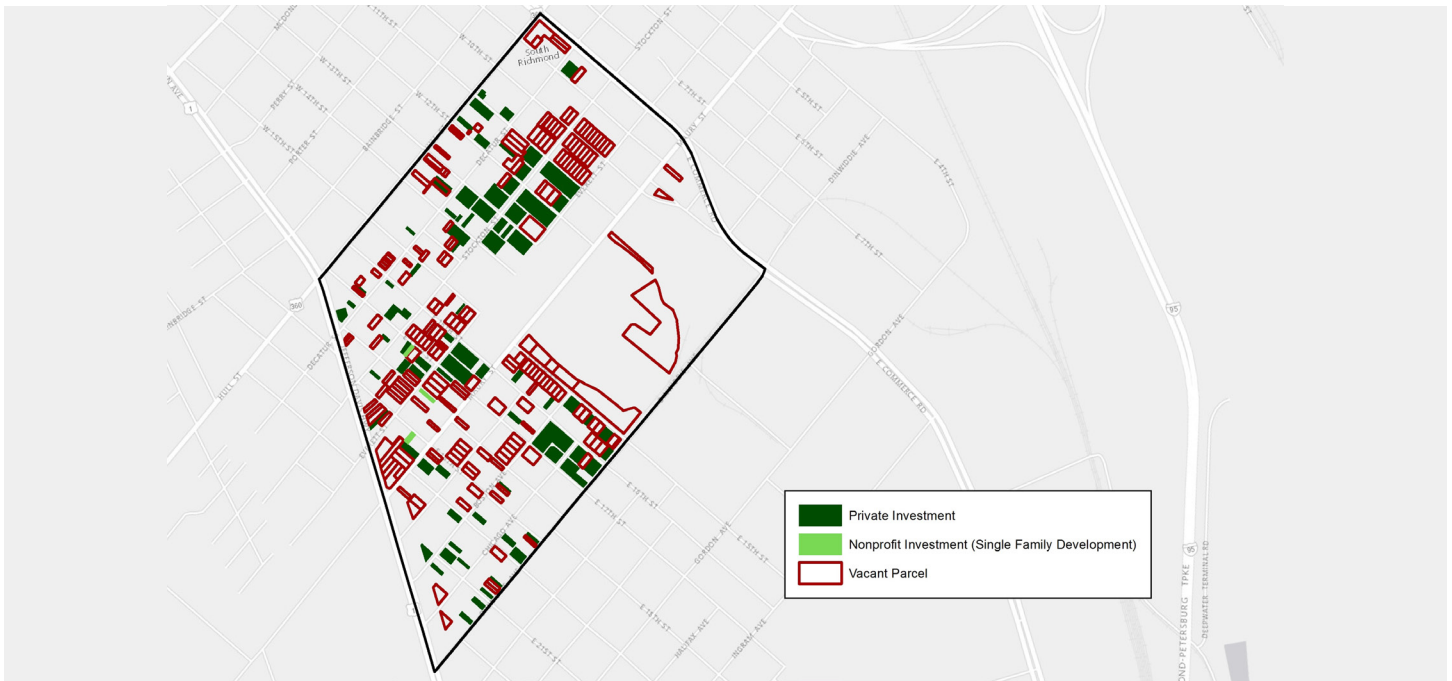
Numerous nonprofit organizations operated in Blackwell during the original NiB program, including RRHA, Housing Opportunities Made Equal (H.O.M.E.) and Southside Community Development and Housing Corporation (SCDHC). These organizations invested in Blackwell variously through the construction of new housing units, the rehabilitation of existing units and the provision of housing counseling services. In total, nonprofit development groups invested an estimated \$415,000 in three Blackwell properties from 2006 to 2015 (see Map 3), and H.O.M.E. invested approximately \$663,413 in down payment assistance for 67 Blackwell homeowners.

As of 2016, 23.5 percent of the parcels in the Blackwell NiB target area were vacant, which is 11.2 percentage points higher than the overall vacancy rate in the city (see Map 3).² The 2015 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates indicate that 56.6 percent of residents in the census tract containing the Blackwell target area are housing-cost burdened, meaning they spend more than 30 percent of their household income on housing costs.³ This figure is 10.7 percentage points above the 45.9 percent of housing cost-burdened residents in the City as a whole.

According to the 2015 ACS 5-year estimates, the census tract that contains the Blackwell target area has a median family income of \$40,074 and a poverty rate of 33.2 percent. By comparison, the City has a median family income of \$50,307 and a poverty rate of 19.3 percent. Given Blackwell’s relatively high poverty rate and low median family income, opportunities may remain for local government, nonprofit and private investment to help improve neighborhood conditions in Blackwell.



Map 3: Nonprofit Investment and Vacant Parcels in Blackwell (FY2006-FY2015)



Note: This map quantifies investment based on property sales and renovations, and thus may underestimate reinvestment.
 Source: City of Richmond Property Sale Data, Building Permit Data and Land Use Data, FY2006-FY2015.

CONTINUING TO BLOOM: BLACKWELL TODAY

The HOPE VI grant and NiB helped Blackwell experience a steady stream of revitalization projects throughout the early 2000s, including the HOPE VI-funded replacement of public housing units with mixed-income properties for rental and ownership and the construction of the Blackwell Community Center.

After decades of revitalization efforts that largely displaced low-income residents and offered few opportunities for them to return to Blackwell, community members spoke out. Activists groups such as the Residents of Public Housing in Richmond Against

Mass Eviction (RePHRAME), which formed in 2008, began to demand that the city implement a one-to-one ratio of demolished and constructed affordable housing units. However, as of 2017, the City has yet to formally adopt such a policy.

Cover photo by Emily Wavering

Additional Sources: [City of Richmond Planning and Development Review, "Blackwell Neighborhood Revitalization Plan," \(1996\).](#)
["RRHA Breaks Ground on 188 New Homes in the Hope VI Blackwell Community," PRNewswire \(April 23, 2004\).](#)

1 Amy L. Howard and Thad Williamson, "Reframing public housing in Richmond, Virginia: Segregation, resident resistance and the future of redevelopment," *Cities* 57: 33-39 (September 2016).

2 The American Community Survey 2015 5-Year Estimates for the City indicate a vacancy rate of 12.3 percent.

3 The share of the population that is housing-cost burdened may be a function of housing supply, housing prices, household incomes and personal preferences.



CARVER/NEWTOWNE WEST



Neighborhoods in Bloom Retrospective

NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY

The Carver/Newtowne West target area is composed of two adjacent neighborhoods in the heart of downtown Richmond that share a history of industrial-spurred growth and decline. Although the first building in the area was constructed in 1787, the neighborhoods did not formally develop until the mid-1800s. As industrialization boomed, Carver/Newtowne West was increasingly established as residential areas, becoming home to laborers and immigrants. The neighborhoods were densely populated following the Civil War.

By the early 1900s, Carver/Newtowne West was home to at least six major industries and several black-owned businesses. The City segregation policy and the departure of many white residents spurred the rapid racial transition of Carver/Newtowne West to an almost entirely African American community in the mid-1900s. In 1943, Richmond's zoning ordinance discouraged residential development, compounding disinvestment in the neighborhoods.

Map 1: Neighborhoods in Bloom Impact and Target Areas – Carver/Newtowne West



From 1920 to 1949, the City employed a new strategy for reviving the Carver/Newtowne West community whereby blight was cleared before redevelopment began. This program razed many more houses than it could rebuild, forcing large numbers of African American residents into the unsuitable dwellings that remained.

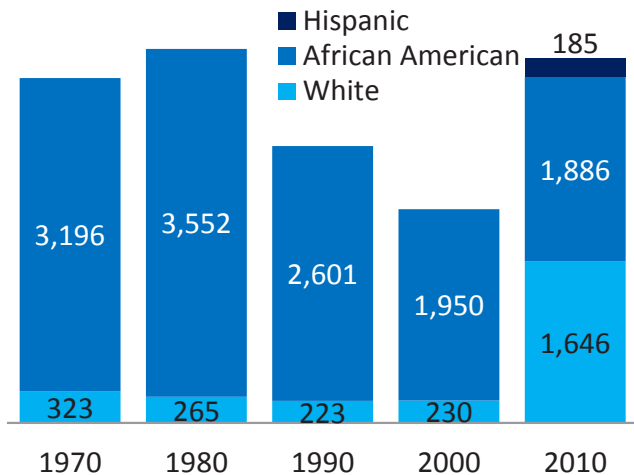
In the 1950s, the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) proposed a redevelopment plan, which was contested by the community. Known as the "Carver Plan," the proposal included plans to raze more than 400 residences to make room for the Richmond-Petersburg Turnpike (today Interstate 95). Although the expressway was ultimately constructed, community criticism redirected future revitalization efforts in Carver/Newtowne West. By 1959, 97 percent of the 888 substandard dwellings in Carver/Newtowne West had been rehabilitated and were in compliance with

building codes. Since 1986, community associations have been actively involved in the redevelopment and revitalization efforts of these two neighborhoods.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHANGE

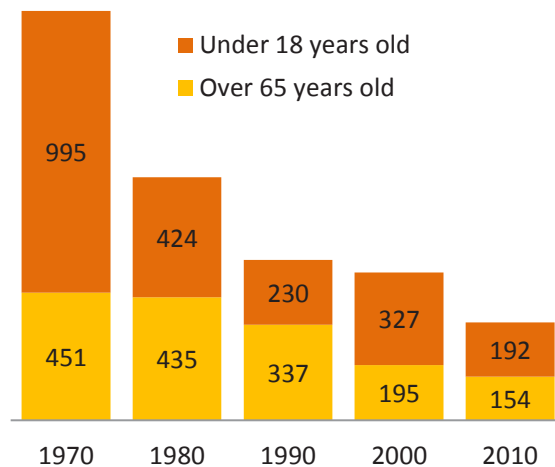
The population in the census tract containing the Carver/Newtowne West target area decreased by 2,019 individuals from 1970 to 2000 (3,501 residents to 1,482 residents). The first decade of the 21st century reversed this trend, and by 2010, the tract had approximately 3,900 residents. The racial composition of the surrounding census tract remained relatively consistent from 1970 to 2000. Over this time period, approximately 85 to 90 percent of residents were African American and 10 to 15 percent of residents were white (see Figure 1). By 2010 Carver/Newtowne West's population was 50.6 percent African American, 44.4 percent white and 4.9 percent Hispanic. Carver/

Figure 1: Racial Composition in Carver/Newtowne West's Surrounding Census Tract, 1970-2010



Note: Sample only includes individuals who self-identify as one race.
Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

Figure 2: Age Composition in Carver/Newtowne West's Surrounding Census Tract, 1970-2010



Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

Note: When measuring the investment and impact of NiB in the early 2000s, the City and external researchers defined the Carver/Newtowne West measurement area as the census tract that contained the target area. This profile also uses that definition, and the measurement area includes the following 2010 census tract: 51760040200.

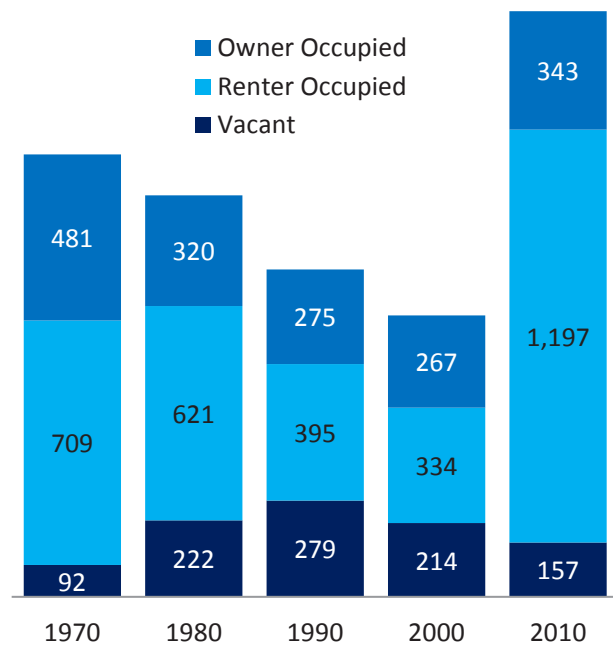


Newtowne West’s populations of individuals under 18 and individuals over 65 both decreased steadily from 1970 to 2010 (see Figure 2).

The majority of housing units in the census tract that contains Carver/Newtowne West have consistently been renter-occupied from 1970 to 2010 (see Figure 3). Over this time period, the percentage of homeowner-occupied units topped out at 37.5 percent in 1970. Decennial census data indicate that the homeownership rate has fallen more recently, with 20.2 percent of occupants owning their homes in 2010. The number of vacant housing units in Carver/Newtowne West peaked in 1990 at 279 units.

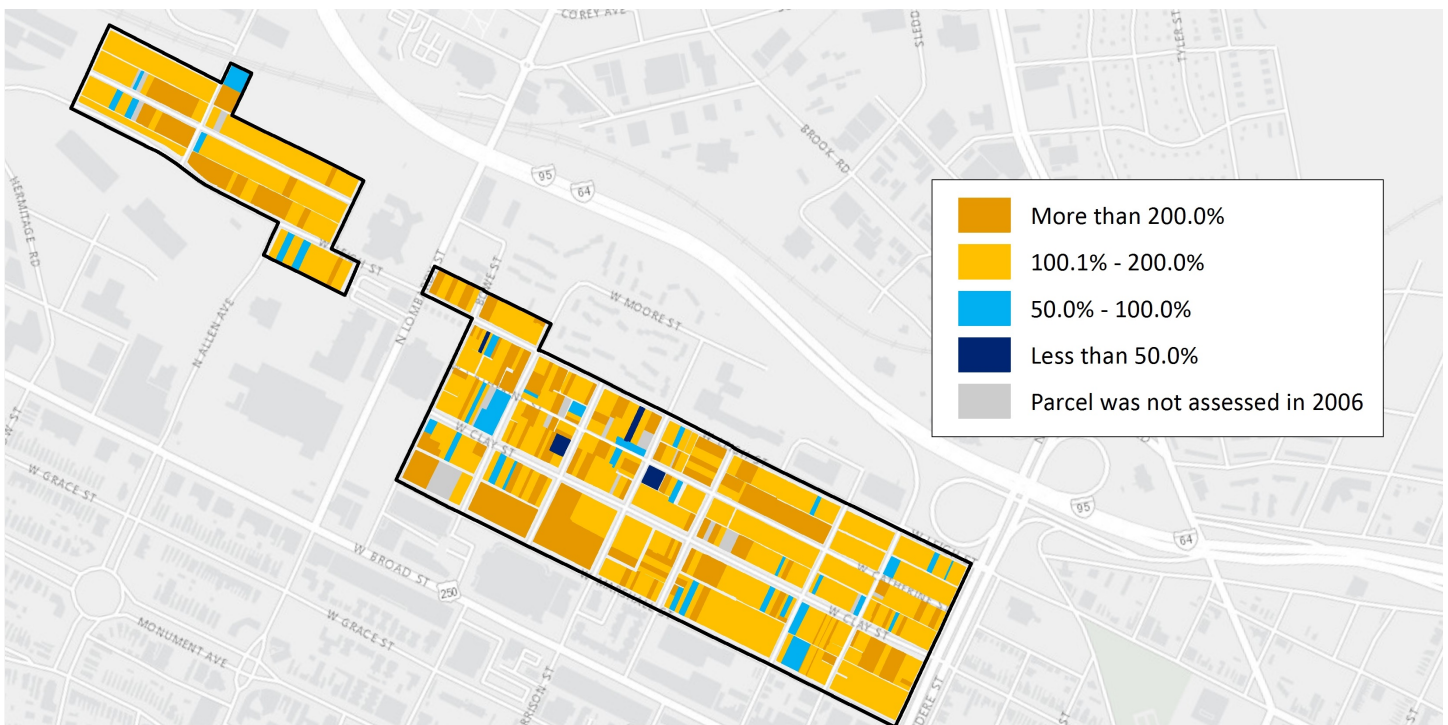
Of the 631 Carver/Newtowne West residential land parcels that were assessed both in FY2006 — immediately following the official end of the NiB program — and in FY2016, 585 (92.7 percent) experienced an increase in nominal assessment value (see Map 2). Of these, 169 parcels (26.8 percent) more than doubled their 2006 assessed value by 2016. One parcel (0.2 percent) experienced no change in nominal assessment value over the 10 year time period and 45 parcels (7.1 percent) had a lower nominal dollar value in FY2016 than in FY2006.

Figure 3: Housing Occupancy in Carver/Newtowne West’s Surrounding Census Tract, 1970-2010



Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

Map 2: 2016 Assessment Value as a Percent of 2006 Assessment Value in Carver/Newtowne West



Source: City of Richmond Assessment Data, FY2006-FY2016.

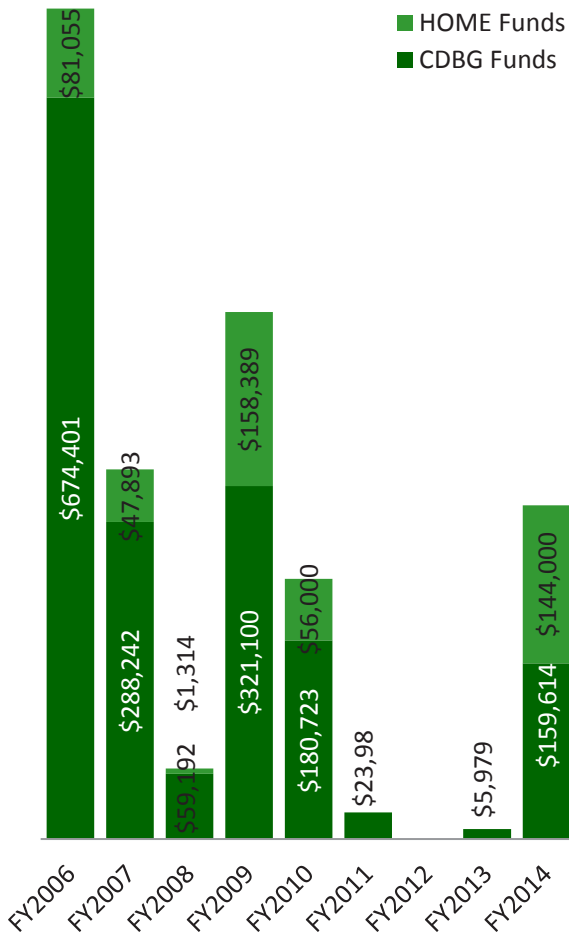


INVESTMENT AFTER NEIGHBORHOODS IN BLOOM

Public Investment

After NiB, the City’s investment of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funding in Carver/Newtowne West fluctuated year by year. Local government investment in Carver/Newtowne West was highest in FY2006 with a total of approximately \$755,456 and lowest in FY2012 when the neighborhoods did not receive CDBG or HOME funding (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Local Government Investment in Carver/Newtowne West (FY2006-FY2014)



Source: City of Richmond CAPER Reports, FY2006-FY2014.

Nonprofit Investment

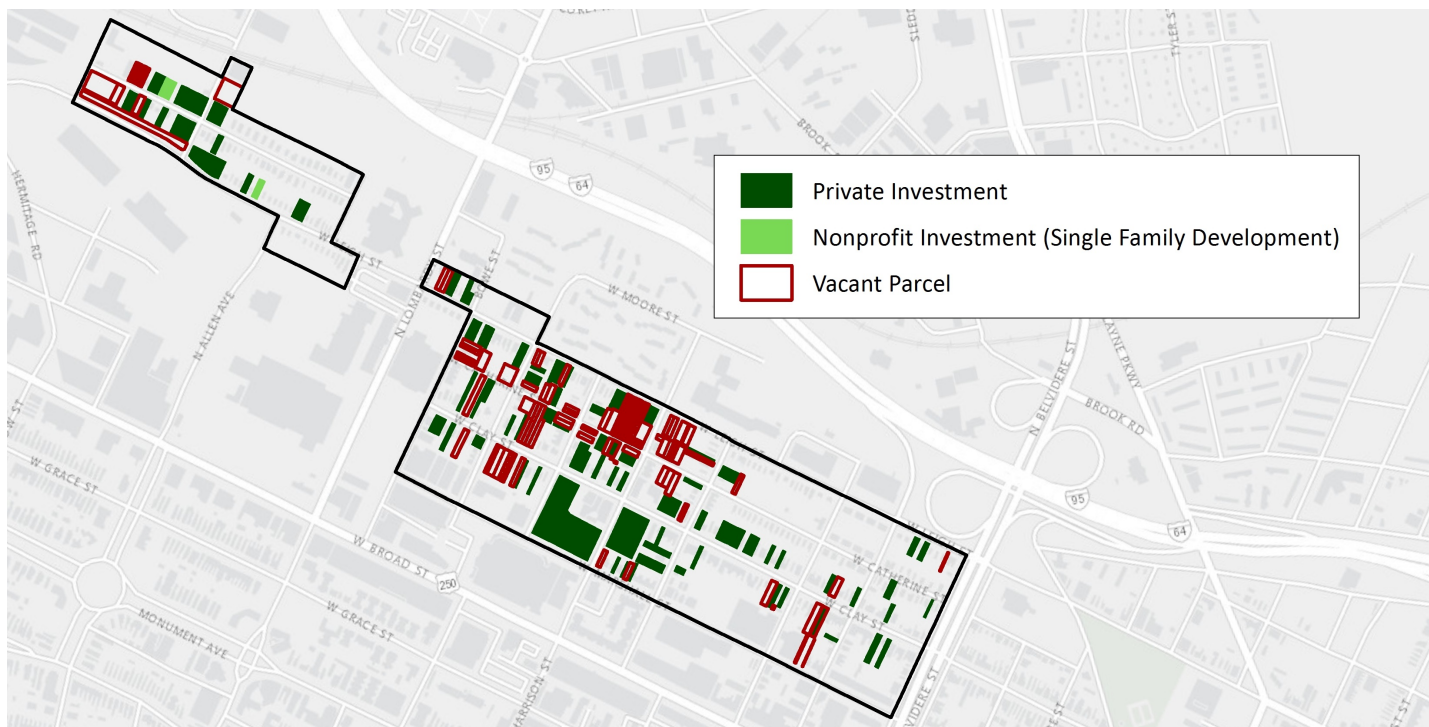
The nonprofit organizations operating in Carver/Newtowne West during NiB included Housing Opportunities Made Equal (H.O.M.E.) and the Carver Area Civic Improvement League. These organizations invested in Carver/Newtowne West through the construction of new housing units, the rehabilitation of existing units and the provision of housing counseling services. In total, nonprofit development groups invested an estimated \$700,000 in four Carver/Newtowne West properties from 2006 to 2015 (see Map 3), and all of these properties experienced property value increases over the same time period. H.O.M.E. provided approximately \$75,131 in down payment assistance to eight Carver/Newtowne West homeowners during this time period.

As of 2016, 12.6 percent of the parcels in the Carver/Newtowne West NiB target area were vacant, which is roughly equivalent to the overall vacancy rate in the City (see Map 3).¹ The 2015 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates indicate that 54.1 percent of residents in the census tract containing the Carver/Newtowne West target area are housing-cost burdened, meaning they spend more than 30 percent of their household income on housing costs.² This figure is 8.2 percentage points above the 45.9 percent of housing cost-burdened residents in the City as a whole.

According to the 2015 ACS 5-year estimates, the census tract that contains the Carver/Newtowne West target area has a median family income of \$51,771 and a poverty rate of 20.9 percent. By comparison, the City has a median family income of \$50,307 and a poverty rate of 19.3 percent.



Map 3: Nonprofit Investment and Vacant Parcels in Carver/Newtowne West (FY2006-FY2015)



Note: This map quantifies investment based on property sales and renovations, and thus may underestimate reinvestment. Source: City of Richmond Property Sale Data, Building Permit Data and Land Use Data, FY2006-FY2015.

CONTINUING TO BLOOM: CARVER/NEWTOWNE WEST TODAY

Carver/Newtowne West has seen major development projects since NiB began in 1999. In 2001, Maggie L. Walker High School, which historically served as a high school for African American students and had been vacant for a decade, was reopened as the Governor’s School for Government and International Studies.³

The expansion of Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) has compelled Carver/Newtowne West to forge a relationship with the university. In 1996, the presidents of VCU and the Carver Area Civic Improvement League partnered, committing to creating a shared community

and protecting its historic value to the City. In 1997, VCU police began patrolling Carver/Newtowne West to help reduce crime in the area, which serves the interests of students and residents.⁴

Although VCU and Carver/Newtowne West have formed a relationship to improve the area, residents have expressed concern over the development of multifamily and rental housing in Carver/Newtowne West, including the 2012 construction of a 136-unit apartment complex built by a private developer to provide student housing.

Cover photo by Emily Wavering

Additional sources: [U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service, “Carver Residential Historic District National Register of Historic Places Registration Form” \(October 1990\).](#) [Virginia Commonwealth University Department of Urban Studies and Planning, “Carver: The Neighborhood Plan” \(June 2002\).](#)

³ “After Years of VCU Growth, Carver Fights Back,” *Style Weekly* (May 24, 2011).

⁴ C.W. Howard and Allison, K. W. (2004). “Bringing All Partners to the Table: The Virginia Commonwealth University and Carver Community Partnership.” *Metropolitan Universities* 15(3): 57-76.

¹The American Community Survey 2015 5-Year Estimates for the City of Richmond indicate a vacancy rate of 12.3 percent.

²The share of the population that is housing-cost burdened may be a function of housing supply, housing prices, household incomes and personal preferences.



CHURCH HILL CENTRAL



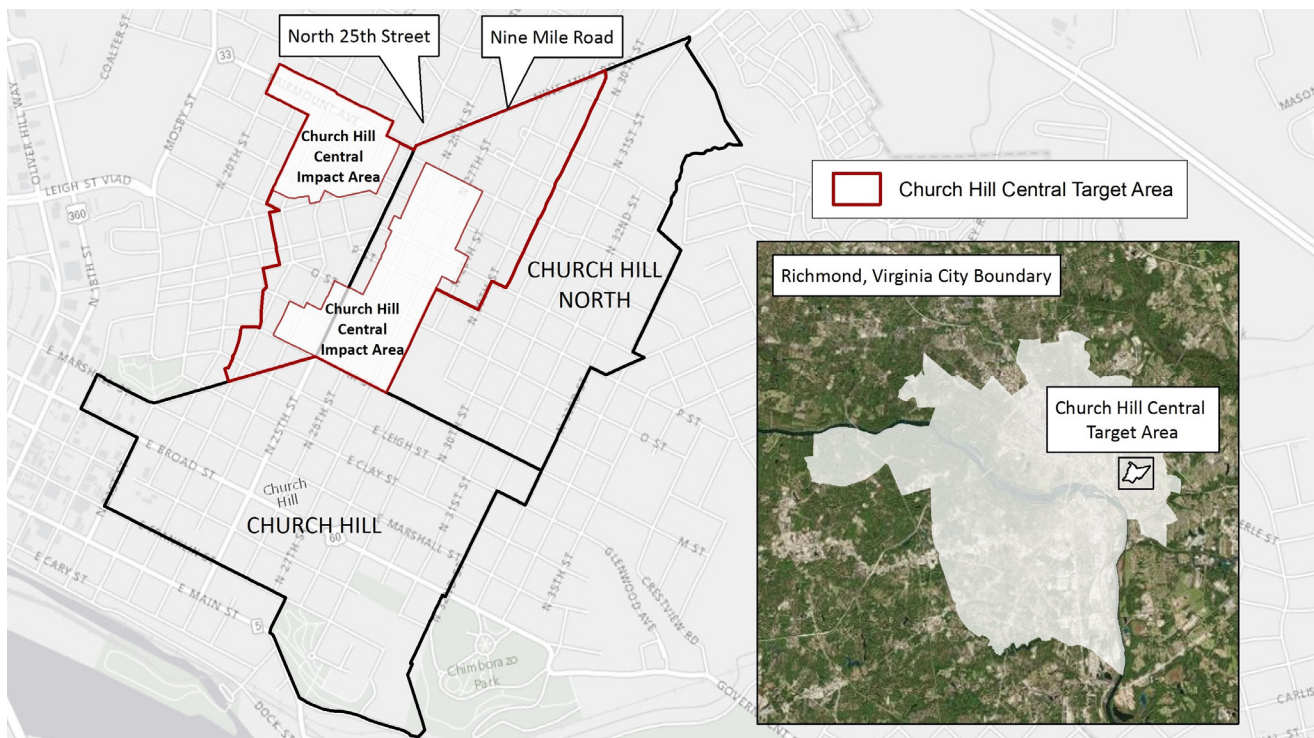
Neighborhoods in Bloom Retrospective

NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY

Church Hill Central, a target area defined by the City of Richmond for Neighborhoods in Bloom (NiB), lies adjacent to the Church Hill neighborhood and partially inside the Church Hill North neighborhood boundary (see Map 1). Church Hill and Church Hill North share a common history dating back to 1737. Both neighborhoods were formally annexed by the City following the Civil War, and approximately 75 percent of the residential buildings in Church Hill and Church Hill North were constructed between 1867 and 1900.

Historians describe the 20th century as a period of decline for Church Hill and Church Hill North, as the City experienced a residential migration to its western boundaries and the adjacent counties. After several decades of population loss and worsening neighborhood conditions, Church Hill neighborhood revitalization began in earnest in the 1980s when the Historic Richmond Foundation began purchasing homes to resell to private homeowners for restoration. Through this effort, over 200 properties were renovated from 1983 to 1996, primarily by first-time homeowners. The Church Hill Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1997.

Map 1: Neighborhoods in Bloom Central Impact and Target Areas – Church Hill Central

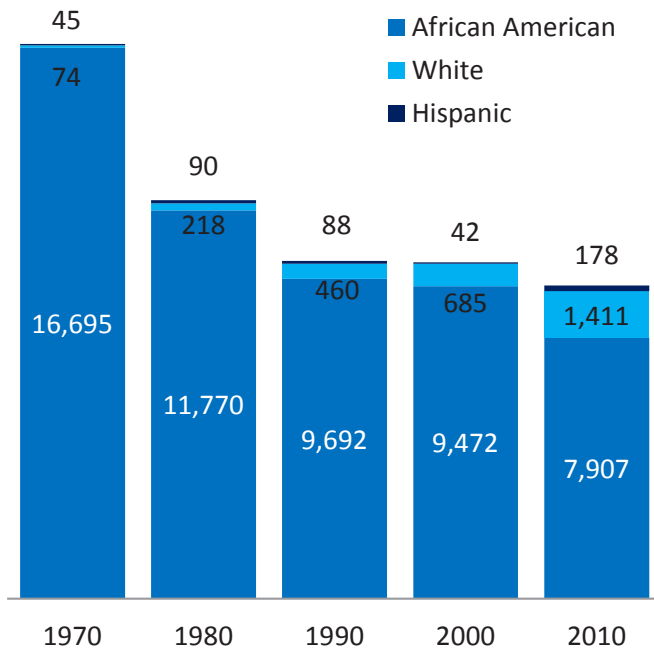


When NiB began in the fall of 1999, Church Hill North had a high concentration of poverty and vacant properties. A steady influx of private investment in Church Hill — coupled with nonprofit housing investment in Church Hill North — made the neighborhood a promising candidate for NiB investment. During the original NiB program (FY2000 to FY2005), City investments of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funding totaling almost \$2 million were concentrated in the Church Hill Central impact areas. The original NiB program also provided expanded city services, including increased policing and infrastructure investment, to the Church Hill Central target area.¹

NEIGHBORHOOD CHANGE

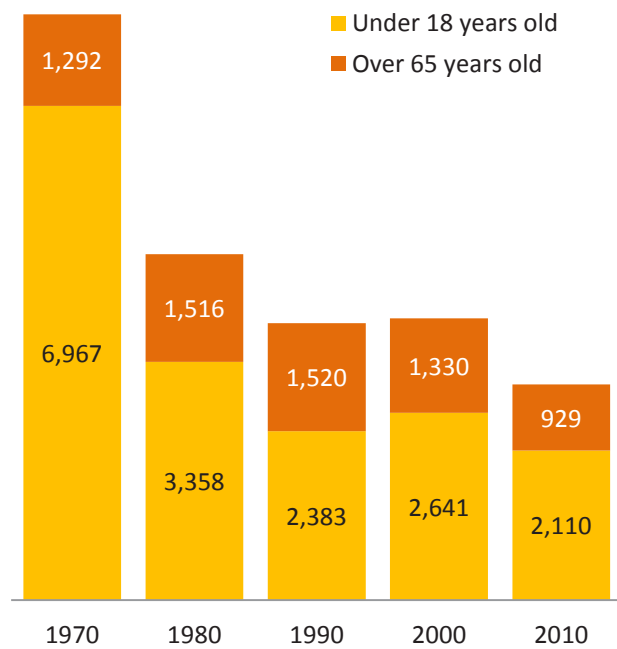
In the 1970s, Church Hill Central experienced a population loss of over 4,000 individuals, as well as demographic changes that included a 1.8 percentage point decrease in the total number of African American residents and a 13.6 percentage point decrease in the number of residents under the age of 18 (see Figures 1 and 2, respectively). The area continued to experience an increase in the number of non-African American residents every decade from 1980 until the first full year of NiB implementation in 2000, but it remained a majority African American area with approximately 92.9 percent African American residents in 2000. In the 2000s, the number of white residents more than doubled, and by 2010, 83.3 percent of residents were African American and 14.9 percent were white.

Figure 1: Racial Composition in Church Hill Central's Surrounding Census Tracts, 1970-2010



Note: Sample only includes individuals who self-identify as one race.
Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

Figure 2: Age Composition in Church Hill Central's Surrounding Census Tracts, 1970-2010

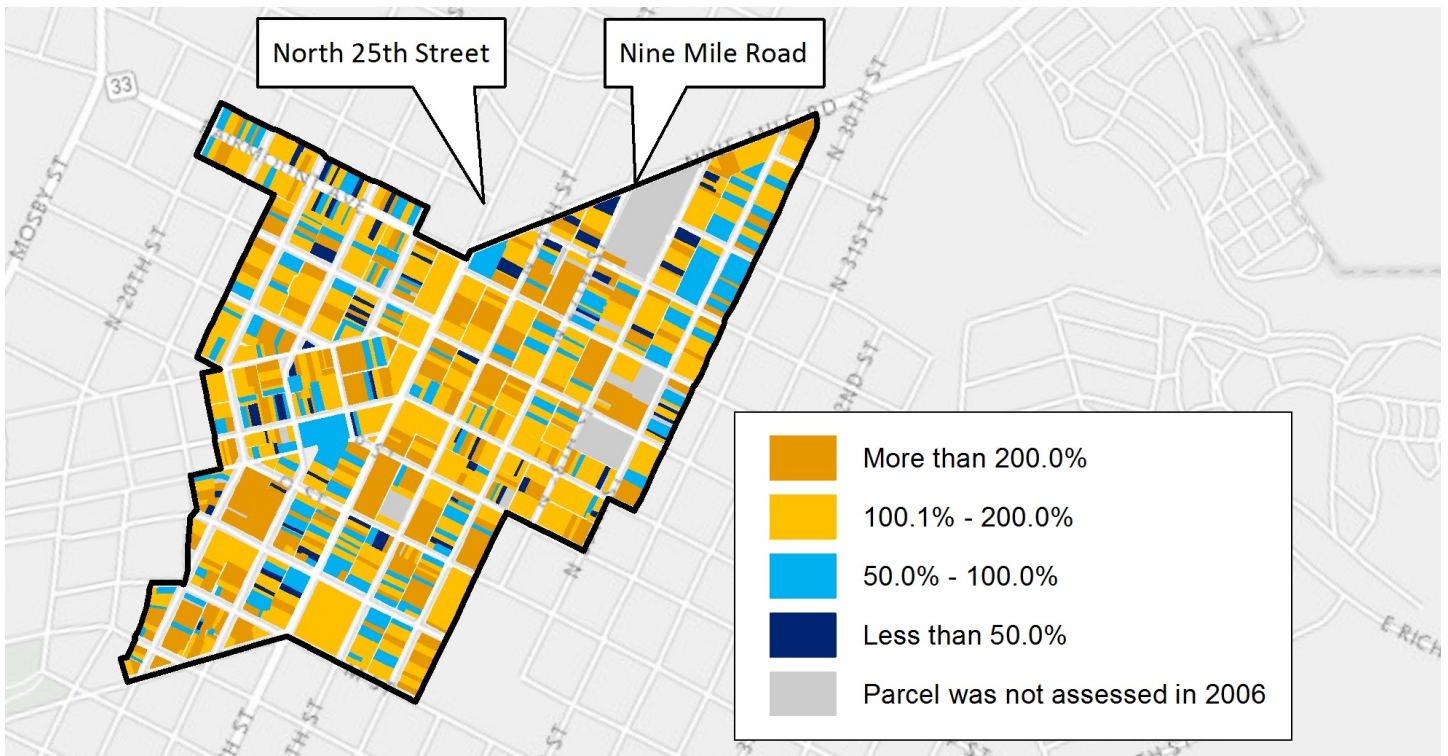


Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

Note: When measuring the investment and impact of NiB in the early 2000s, the City and external researchers defined the Church Hill Central measurement area as the census tracts that contained the Church Hill Central target area. This profile also uses that definition, and as such, the measurement area includes the following 2010 census tracts: 51760020300, 51760020400, 51760020600, and 51760020700.



Map 2: 2016 Residential Assessment Value as a Percent of 2006 Residential Assessment Value in Church Hill Central

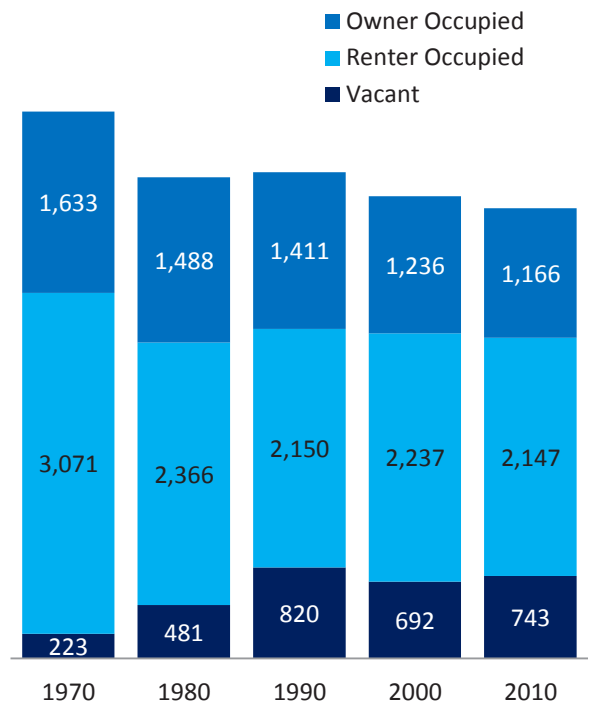


Source: City of Richmond Assessment Data, FY2006-FY2016.

The majority of housing units in Church Hill Central have consistently been renter-occupied from 1970 to 2010 (see Figure 3). Over this time period, the percentage of homeowner-occupied units topped out at 34.3 percent in 1980. Decennial census data indicate that the homeownership rate in Church Hill Central has fallen more recently, with 28.7 percent of occupants owning their homes as of the most recent census in 2010. Church Hill Central has also experienced persistent blight, with the number of vacant housing units peaking in 1990 at 820 units.

Of the 1,103 Church Hill Central residential land parcels that were assessed both in FY2006 — immediately following the official end of the NiB program — and in FY2016, 817 (74.1 percent) experienced an increase in nominal assessment value (see Map 2). Of these, 318 parcels (28.8 percent) more than doubled their 2006 assessed value by 2016. Five parcels (0.5 percent) experienced no change in nominal assessment value over the 10 year time period and 281 parcels (25.5 percent) had a lower nominal dollar value in FY2016 than in FY2006.

Figure 3: Housing Occupancy in Church Hill Central, 1970-2010



Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

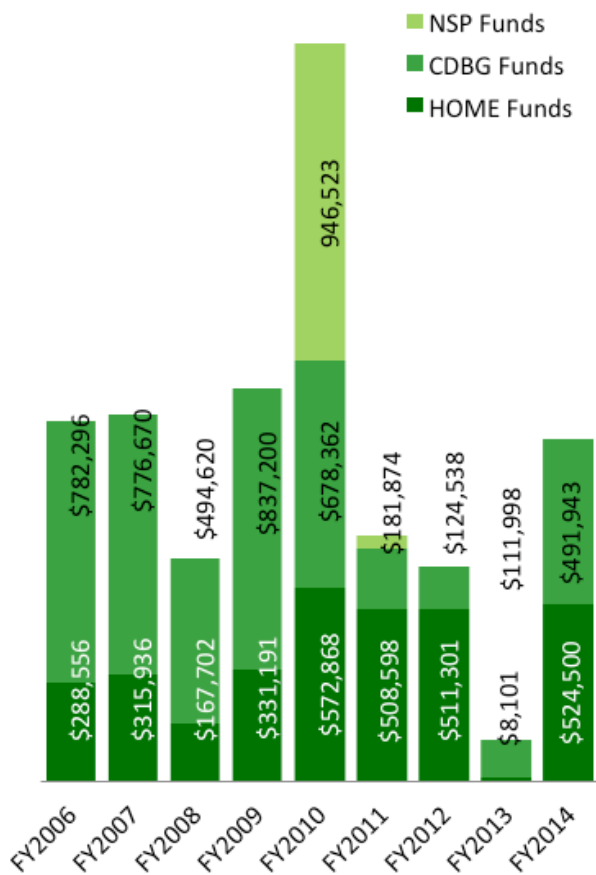


INVESTMENT AFTER NEIGHBORHOODS IN BLOOM

Public Investment

In the years since the end of the NiB program, the City has continued to direct CDBG and HOME funding, as well as funding from the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP), to Church Hill Central. Approximately 21.7 percent of all City CDBG and HOME funding from FY2006 to FY2014 was spent on Church Hill Central revitalization efforts. Post-NiB local government investment in Church Hill Central was highest in FY2010 with a total of approximately \$2.2 million and lowest in FY2013 with a total of approximately \$120,099 (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Local Government Investment in Church Hill Central (FY2006-FY2014)



Source: City of Richmond CAPER Reports, FY2006-FY2014.

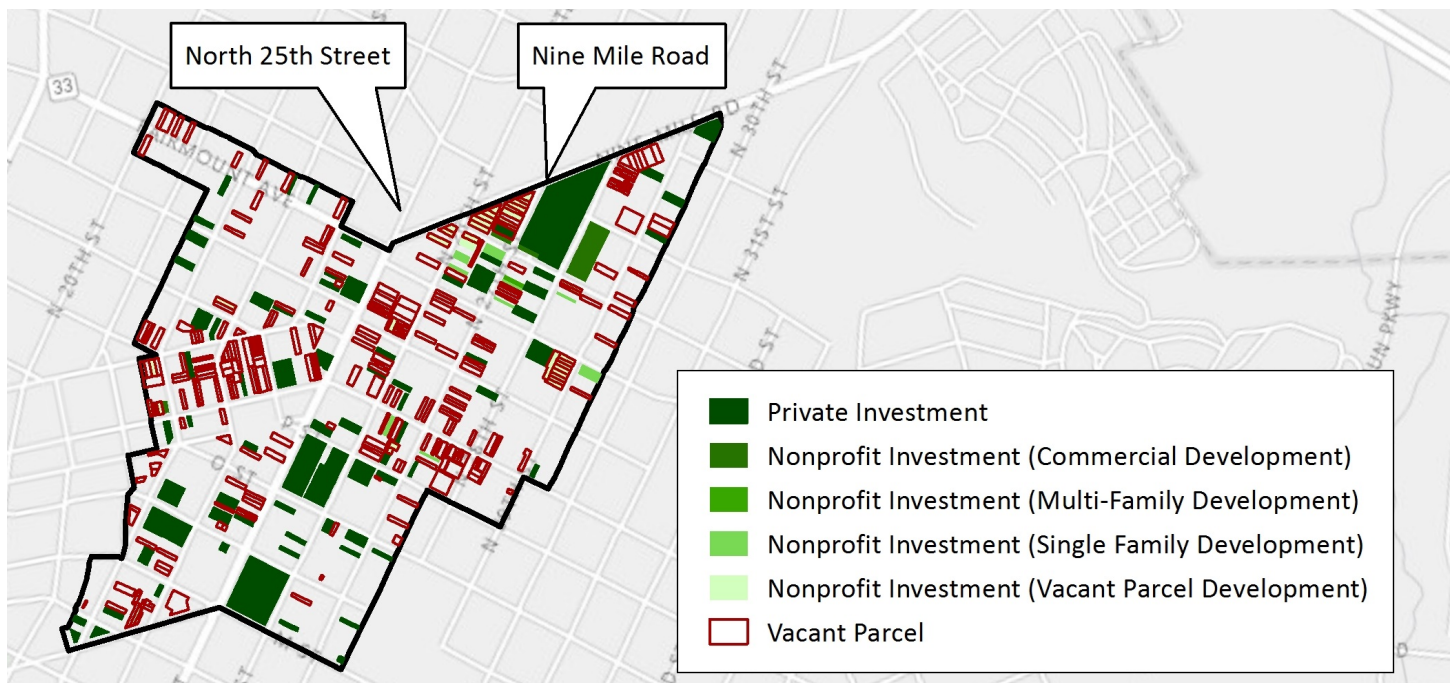
Nonprofit Investment

Numerous nonprofit organizations operated in Church Hill Central during the original NiB program, including the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA), Better Housing Coalition (BHC), project:HOMES (formerly ElderHomes), Interfaith Housing Corporation, Housing Opportunities Made Equal (H.O.M.E.) and the New Visions Civic Association. These organizations invested in Church Hill Central variously through the construction of new housing units, the rehabilitation of existing units and the provision of housing counseling services. In total, nonprofit development groups invested an estimated \$1 million in 59 Church Hill Central properties from 2006 to 2015 (see Map 3), and 44 of these properties experienced property value increases over the same time period. H.O.M.E. provided approximately \$690,350 in down payment assistance to 74 Church Hill Central homeowners during this time period.

As of 2016, 26.0 percent of the parcels in the Church Hill Central NiB target area were vacant, which is just over twice the overall vacancy rate in the city (see Map 3).² The 2015 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates indicate that 47.8 percent of residents in the census tracts containing the Church Hill Central target area are housing-cost burdened, meaning they spend more than 30 percent of their household income on housing costs.³ While this figure is only a few percentage points higher than the 45.9 percent of housing cost-burdened residents citywide, it may be indicative of a persistent need for affordable housing in the area. Poverty rates for Church Hill Central as given by the 2015 ACS 5-year estimates indicate disparity between the census tracts that comprise the target area, with tract-level poverty rates ranging from zero percent to 61.5 percent.



Map 3: Nonprofit Investment and Vacant Parcels in Church Hill Central (FY2006-FY2015)



Note: This map quantifies investment based on property sales and renovations, and thus may underestimate reinvestment.
 Source: City of Richmond Property Sale Data, Building Permit Data and Land Use Data, FY2006-FY2015.

CONTINUING TO BLOOM: CHURCH HILL CENTRAL TODAY

Neighborhood conditions in Church Hill and Church Hill North continue to be distinctly different. Beginning around 2014, Church Hill gained national recognition for its revitalization in general, and for its burgeoning restaurant scene in particular.⁴ Meanwhile, Church Hill North has not become self-sustaining and has continued to receive concentrated public and nonprofit investment. Since 2011, the City has pursued its Church Hill North East End Revitalization initiative, which includes plans for a 300-unit mixed-income residential development and the development of a full-service grocery in an area long

described as a food desert.⁵ In 2014, local nonprofit Bike Walk RVA brought the national Better Block Foundation to Church Hill North for the Church Hill North Better Block Project, which temporarily transformed a block on North 25th Street with provisional bike lanes and pop-up shops. Although the reinvented block was temporary, numerous organizations including Groundwork RVA, Bon Secours Health System and the Virginia Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) have continued to work for more permanent change in the area by investing in local small businesses and funding structural improvements.

Cover photo by Emily Wavering

1 [David Collett and Isabel M. Smith \(1996\), "Church Hill North Application to the National Register of Historic Places."](#)

2 The American Community Survey 2015 5-Year Estimates for the city of Richmond indicate a vacancy rate of 12.3 percent.

3 The share of the population that is housing-cost burdened may be a function of housing supply, housing prices, household incomes and personal preferences.

4 ["10 Best: Up-and-coming neighborhoods around the USA,"](#) USA Today, May 7, 2014; ["Shopping and Eating Amid History in Richmond, Va.,"](#) The Washington Post, November 19, 2014.

5 "Church Hill North Revitalization Community Unit Plan – Preliminary Plan: The Old Armstrong High School" Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, 2014; ["Grocery store planned for Church Hill 'food desert,'"](#) Richmond Times-Dispatch, May 17, 2016.



HIGHLAND PARK– SOUTHERN TIP



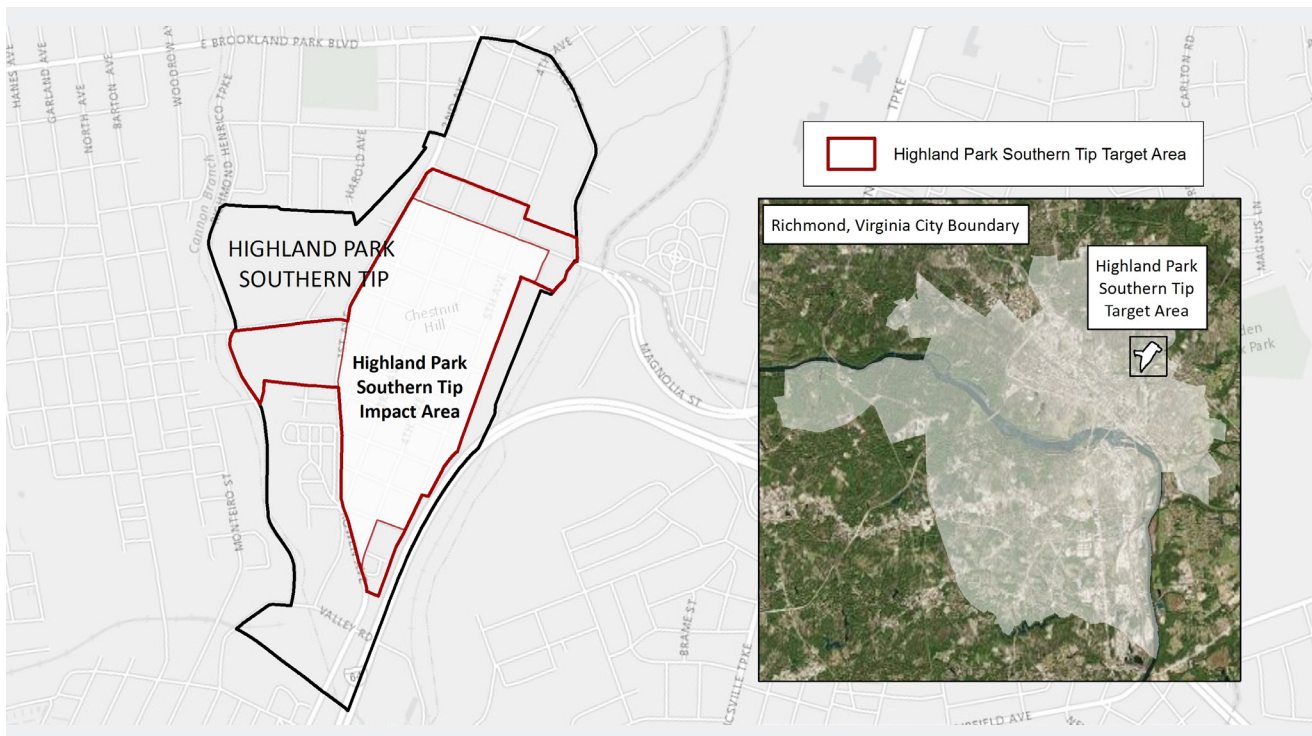
Neighborhoods in Bloom Retrospective

NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY

In its early days, Highland Park – Southern Tip, also referred to as Chestnut Hill Plateau, was a middle class “street car” suburb of the City of Richmond. Development of this land, originally a farm owned by prominent Richmond resident Samuel DuVal (1714–1784), did not truly start until 1890. A strong and steady demand for middle-class housing in the area prevented the economic downturn many other neighborhoods experienced in 1893. Jobs in the area supported the ongoing construction and maintenance of mostly single-family homes of various architectural styles.

In the first half of the 20th century, the Highland Park community continued as a middle-class white area, but that began to change in the 1960s. By 1970, about 70 percent of the properties in this neighborhood had changed hands and racial ownership. Real estate salesmen at the time persuaded white home owners to sell their homes at low prices, playing on racial fears of a quickly-transforming neighborhood demographic. Those homes were then sold to black residents at high rates, often creating profits for the agents.

Map 1: Neighborhoods in Bloom Impact and Target Areas – Highland Park – Southern Tip



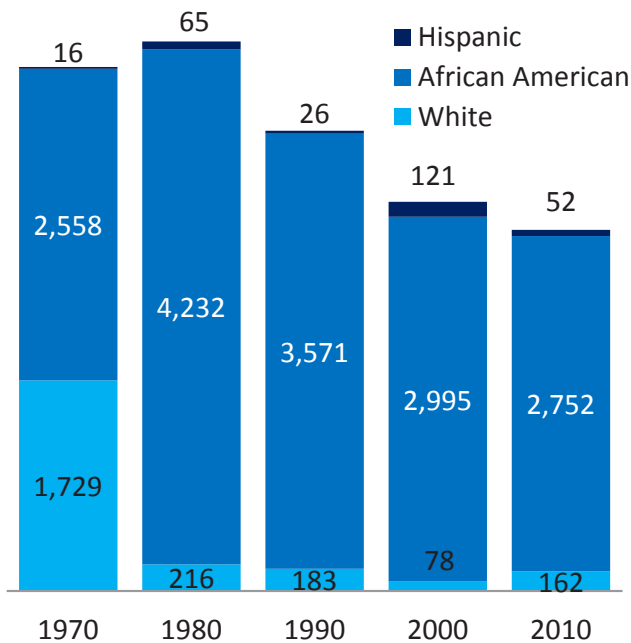
During the 1980s and 1990s, a large number of Highland Park residences deteriorated, and subsequent housing price depreciation motivated higher income residents to move out of the area. The neighborhood also experienced an increase in crime rates over this time period.

In 1988, the Highland Park Restoration and Preservation Program (HP-RAPP) was formed to improve the declining housing stock. The initiative, which later changed its name to the Highland Park Community Development Corporation, was sponsored by the City and funded through the Housing Conservation Program and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding through the early 2000s.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHANGE

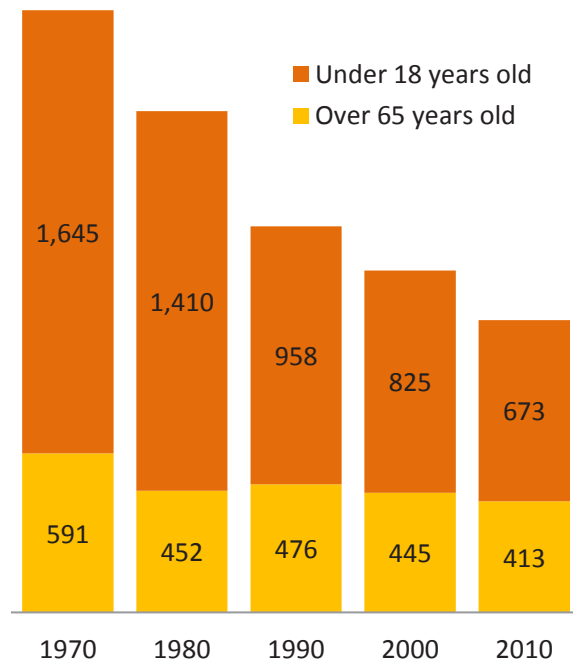
The population in the census tract containing the Highland Park – Southern Tip target area decreased from 4,508 residents in 1980 to 2,957 residents in 2010. The area has been predominantly African American since around 1980, at which point the number of African American residents reached 93.9 percent (see Figure 1). The census tract surrounding Highland Park – Southern Tip experienced decreases in the numbers of residents under 18 years old and over 65 years old from 1970 to 2010. While 38.1 percent of area residents were under 18 years old in 1970, the percentage decreased to 22.8 percent by 2010.

Figure 1: Racial Composition in Highland Park – Southern Tip’s Surrounding Census Tract, 1970-2010



Note: Sample only includes individuals who self-identify as one race.
Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

Figure 2: Age Composition in Highland Park – Southern Tip’s Surrounding Census Tract, 1970-2010



Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

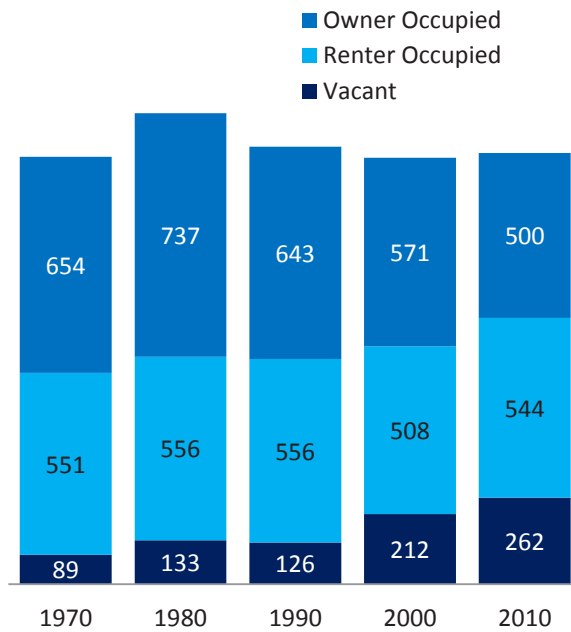
Note: When measuring the investment and impact of NiB in the early 2000s, the City and external researchers defined the Highland Park – Southern Tip measurement area as the census tract that contained the target area. This profile also uses that definition, and the measurement area includes the following 2010 census tract: 51760010900.



The census tract containing Highland Park – Southern Tip has consistently maintained a relatively equal split between owner-occupied housing units and renter-occupied housing units from 1970 to 2010 (see Figure 3). The tract’s homeownership rate peaked in 1980 at 51.7 percent. Decennial census data indicate that the homeownership rate has fallen more recently, with 38.3 percent of occupants owning their homes in 2010.

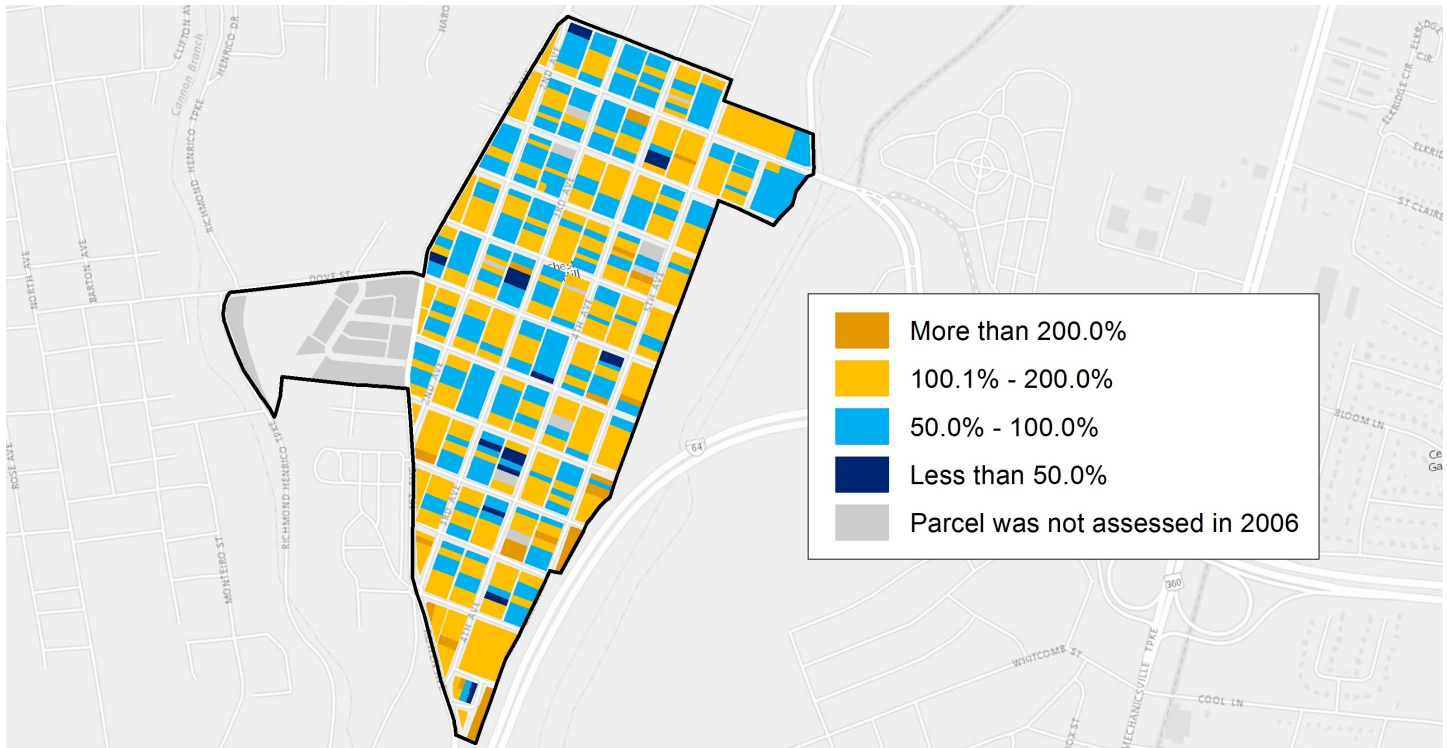
Of the 500 Highland Park – Southern Tip residential land parcels that were assessed both in FY2006 — immediately following the official end of the NiB program — and in FY2016, 259 (51.8 percent) experienced an increase in nominal assessment value (see Map 2). Of these, 22 parcels (4.4 percent) more than doubled their 2006 assessed value by 2016. Five parcels (1.0 percent) experienced no change in nominal assessment value over the 10 year time period and 236 parcels (47.2 percent) had a lower nominal dollar value in FY2016 than in FY2006.

Figure 3: Housing Occupancy in Highland Park – Southern Tip’s Surrounding Census Tract, 1970—2010



Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

Map 2: 2016 Assessment Value as a Percent of 2006 Assessment Value in Highland Park – Southern Tip



Source: City of Richmond Assessment Data, FY2006-FY2016.

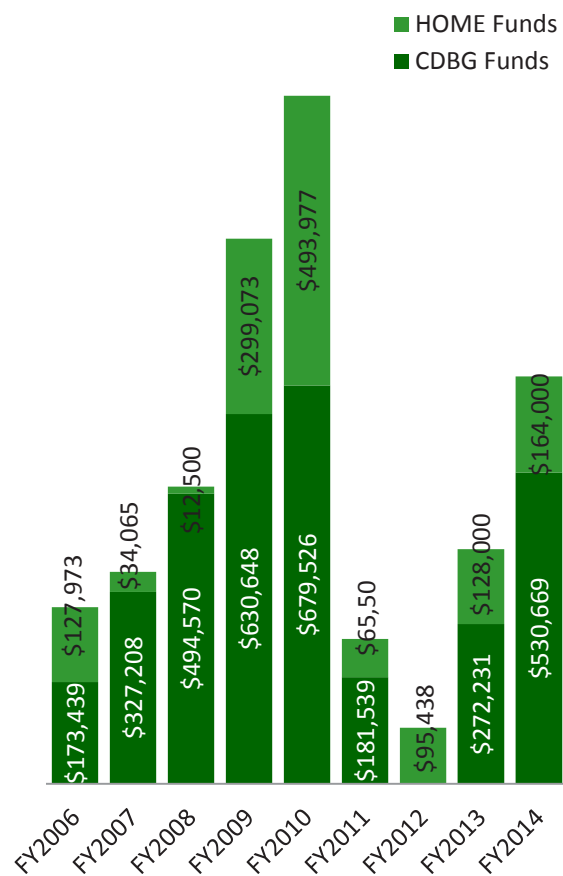


INVESTMENT AFTER NEIGHBORHOODS IN BLOOM

Public Investment

After NiB officially ended, the City’s investment in Highland Park – Southern Tip increased year-over-year until it peaked in FY2010 at over \$1.1 million (see Figure 4). Local government investment in the neighborhood then sharply decreased in FY2011 and was lowest in FY2012 at \$95,438. The neighborhood received increasing amounts of CDBG and HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funding in FY2013 and FY2014, although these amounts did not reach FY2009 and FY2010 levels.

Figure 4: Local Government Investment in Highland Park – Southern Tip (FY2006-FY2014)



Source: City of Richmond CAPER Reports, FY2006-FY2014.

Nonprofit Investment

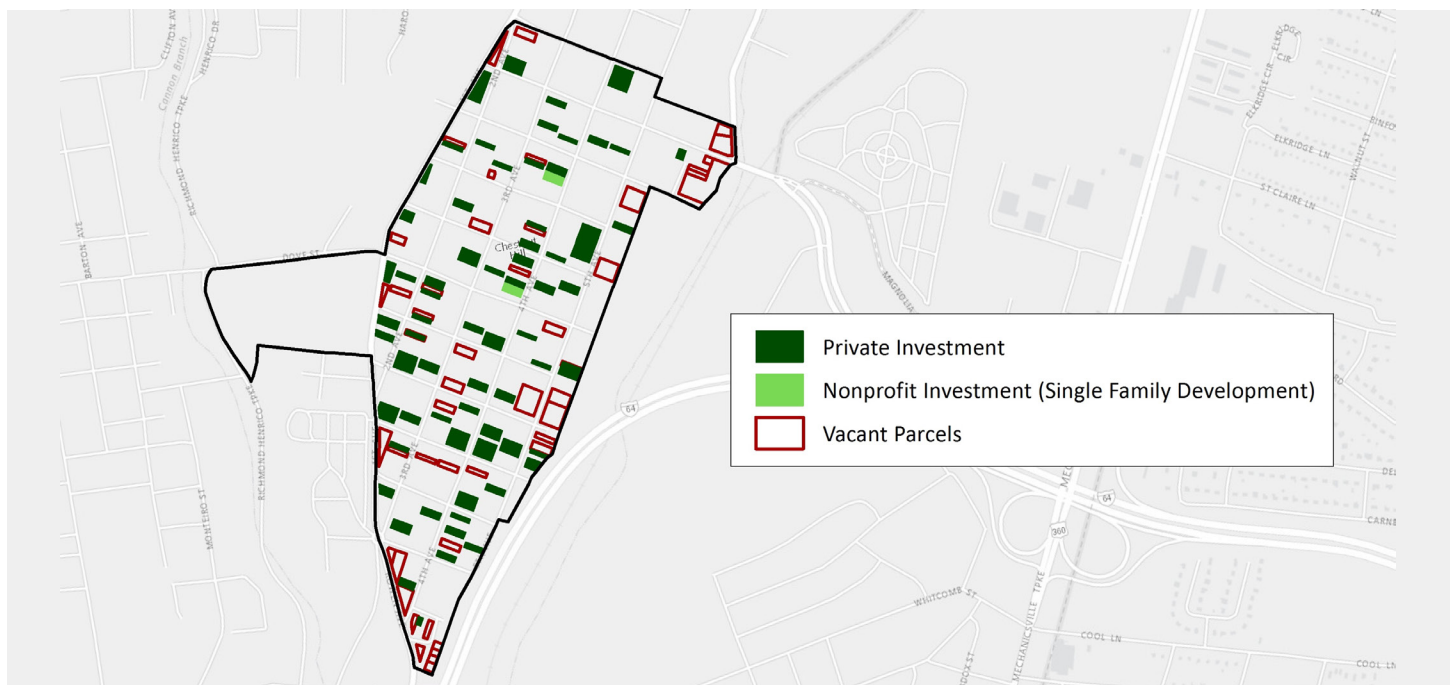
The nonprofit organizations operating in Highland Park – Southern Tip during NiB included the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA), Highland Park Community Development Corporation, project:HOMES (formerly ElderHomes), Housing Opportunities Made Equal (H.O.M.E.) and the Chestnut Hill Civic Association. These organizations invested in Highland Park – Southern Tip through the construction of new housing units, the rehabilitation of existing units and the provision of housing counseling services. In total, nonprofit development groups invested an estimated \$185,000 in two Highland Park – Southern Tip properties from 2006 to 2015 (see Map 3), and both properties experienced property value increases. At the same time, H.O.M.E. provided approximately \$94,140 in down payment assistance to 10 Highland Park – Southern Tip homeowners.

As of 2016, 8.1 percent of the parcels in the Highland Park – Southern Tip NiB target area were vacant, which is 4.2 percentage points less than the overall vacancy rate in the City (see Map 3).¹ The 2015 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates indicate that 56.8 percent of residents in the census tract containing the Highland Park – Southern Tip target area are housing-cost burdened, meaning they spend more than 30 percent of their household income on housing costs.² This figure is 10.9 percentage points above the 45.9 percent of housing cost-burdened residents in the City as a whole.

According to the 2015 ACS 5-year estimates, the census tract that contains the Highland Park – Southern Tip target area has a median family income of \$31,250 and a poverty rate of 24.3 percent. By comparison, the City has a median family income of \$50,307 and a poverty rate of 19.3 percent.



Map 3: Nonprofit Investment and Vacant Parcels in Highland Park – Southern Tip (FY2006-FY2015)



Note: This map quantifies investment based on property sales and renovations, and thus may underestimate reinvestment.
Source: City of Richmond Property Sale Data, Building Permit Data and Land Use Data, FY2006-FY2015.

CONTINUING TO BLOOM: HIGHLAND PARK – SOUTHERN TIP TODAY

In 2008, a public housing project named Dove Court was demolished in Highland Park – Southern Tip.^{3,4} In its place, RRHA and private developer Laurel Street Residential constructed a \$22.9 million, 250 unit mixed-income housing complex called Highland Grove.⁵ As of 2017, Highland Grove was fully occupied, with staff reporting steady interest from prospective residents.⁶

Boaz & Ruth, a neighborhood nonprofit that renovates commercial and residential properties and offers job training to formerly incarcerated community members, opened in Highland Park – Southern Tip in 2002. By 2012, the organization had restored 13 properties, including four commercial sites and nine residential properties

that house formerly incarcerated individuals in need of stable housing. Boaz & Ruth has also graduated almost 90 individuals from its job training program.

The Six Points Innovation Center (6PIC), a center that provides neighborhood youth with access to after-school programming, opened in Highland Park – Southern Tip in June 2017. 6PIC is located in a building owned by Boaz & Ruth and is supported by Storefront for Community Design, Saving Our Youth, Groundwork RVA, ART180, the Virginia Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and the Community Preservation and Development Corporation.

Cover photo by Emily Wavering

1 The American Community Survey 2015 5-Year Estimates for the City indicate a vacancy rate of 12.3 percent.

2 The share of the population that is housing-cost burdened may be a function of housing supply, housing prices, household incomes and personal preferences.

3 [Alix Bryan and Jones, Sandra, "City moves forward with former Dove Court renovations," WTVR News \(March 1, 2012\).](#)

4 [Burl Rolett, "Apartment launch opens door to new era," Richmond BizSense \(October 11, 2013\).](#)

5 [Scott Wise and Jones, Sandra, "Old neighborhood gets multi-million dollar makeover," WTVR News \(March 15, 2013\).](#)

6 Phone call with Highland Grove leasing agent, June 16, 2017.



JACKSON WARD



Neighborhoods in Bloom Retrospective

NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY

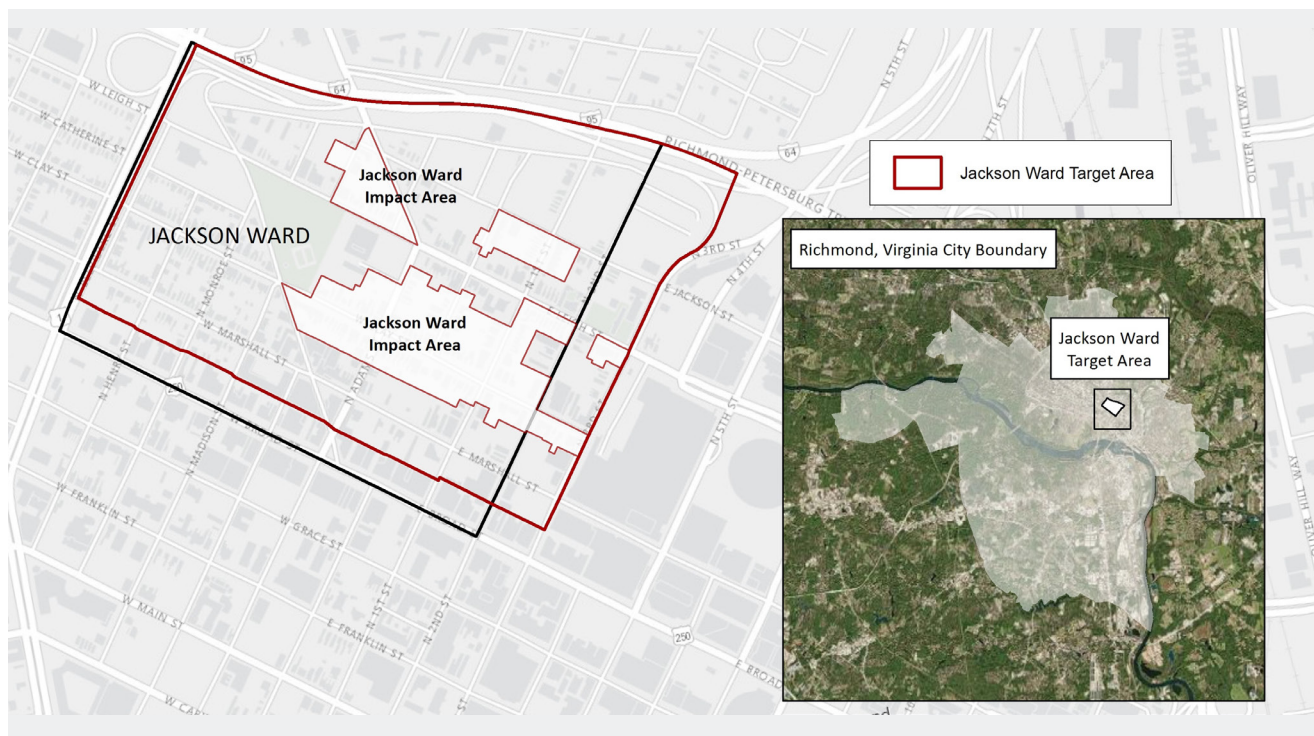
Jackson Ward is a neighborhood with a rich and significant history located immediately west of downtown Richmond. Before the Civil War, the area was home to many of the City of Richmond's German, Italian and Jewish immigrants.

The neighborhood attracted increasing numbers of black residents during Reconstruction, and in 1871, Jackson Ward got its name. In the early 20th century, the neighborhood became predominantly African American. From 1900 to the 1950s, Jackson Ward

served as the political, social, economic, and cultural center for Richmond's African American community. Financial institutions, retailers, theaters and many other establishments were owned and operated by the vibrant community. The neighborhood's nationally recognized importance to African American business, culture and entrepreneurship earned it the nicknames "Black Wall Street" and "Harlem of the South."

By the mid-20th century, development and expansion changed Jackson Ward's appearance and geography.

Map 1: Neighborhoods in Bloom Impact and Target Areas – Jackson Ward



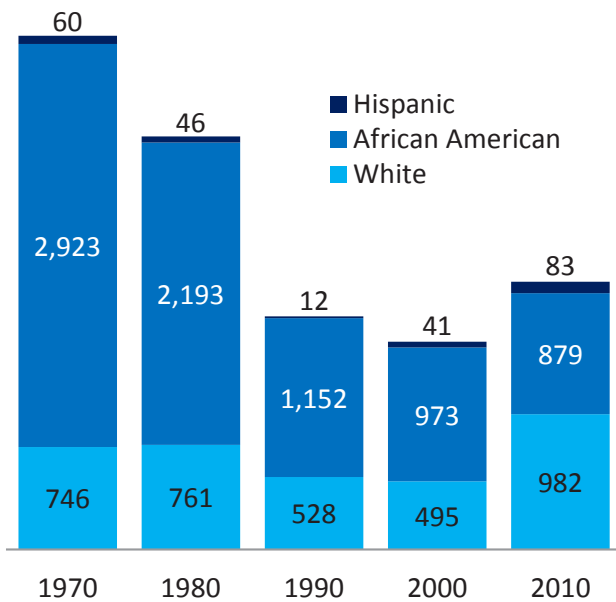
NEIGHBORHOOD CHANGE

The development of the Richmond-Petersburg Turnpike (today Interstate 95) in the late 1950s shrank Jackson Ward’s footprint to the north and the construction of the Richmond Coliseum and the Greater Richmond Convention Center (1970 and 2002, respectively) reshaped the neighborhood’s eastern edge.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, this disruption of the Jackson Ward community led to neighborhood blight. Recognition by the National Register of Historic Places in 1976 as a Landmark District helped spur revitalization in Jackson Ward. In the 21st century, federal government historic tax credits prompted neighborhood restoration, and development around Jackson Ward helped spur economic and cultural activity in the neighborhood.¹

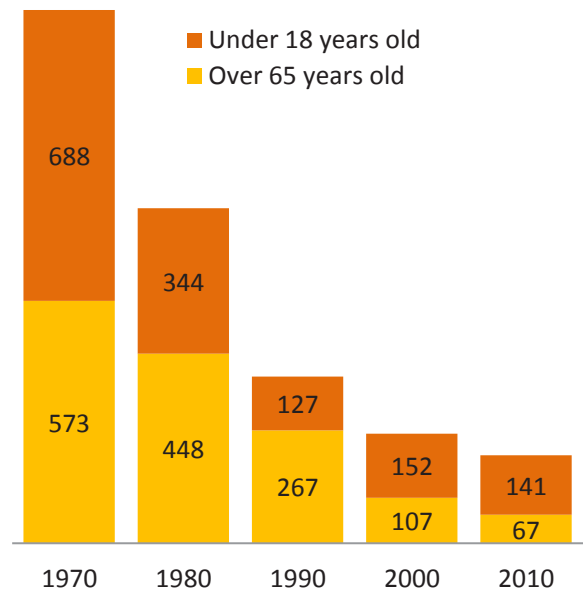
The census tract containing the Jackson Ward target area experienced a population decline of approximately 2,100 individuals from 1970 to 2000, with a population rebound of approximately 500 individuals as of 2010. The area’s African American population has decreased decennially since 1970 (see Figure 1). While the area’s population was 79.5 percent African American in 1970, that percentage decreased to 42.8 percent as of 2010. The census tract surrounding Jackson Ward experienced decreases in the numbers of residents under 18 years old and over 65 years old from 1970 to 2010. Residents under 18 years old decreased from 18.7 percent in 1970 to 6.9 percent in 2010 and residents over 65 years old decreased from 15.6 percent in 1970 to 3.3 percent in 2010.

Figure 1: Racial Composition in Jackson Ward’s Surrounding Census Tract, 1970-2010



Note: Sample only includes individuals who self-identify as one race.
Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

Figure 2: Age Composition in Jackson Ward’s Surrounding Census Tract, 1970-2010



Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

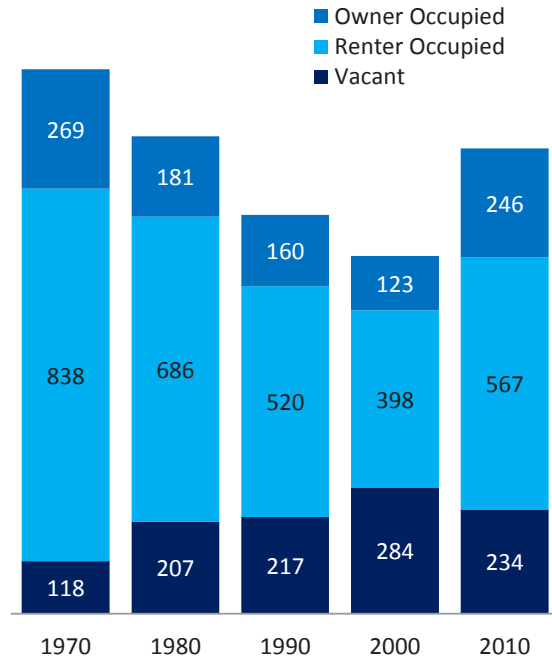
Note: When measuring the investment and impact of NiB in the early 2000s, the City and external researchers defined the Jackson Ward measurement area as the census tract that contained the target area. This profile also uses that definition, and the measurement area includes the following 2010 census tract: 51760030200.



The census tract containing Jackson Ward has consistently had more renter-occupied housing units than owner-occupied housing units (see Figure 3). As of 2010, the tract had its highest percentage of owner-occupied units since 1970 at 23.5 percent. Also as of 2010, 54.2 percent of the tract's housing units were occupied by renters. This is down from a maximum percentage of renter-occupied units at 68.4 percent in 1970.

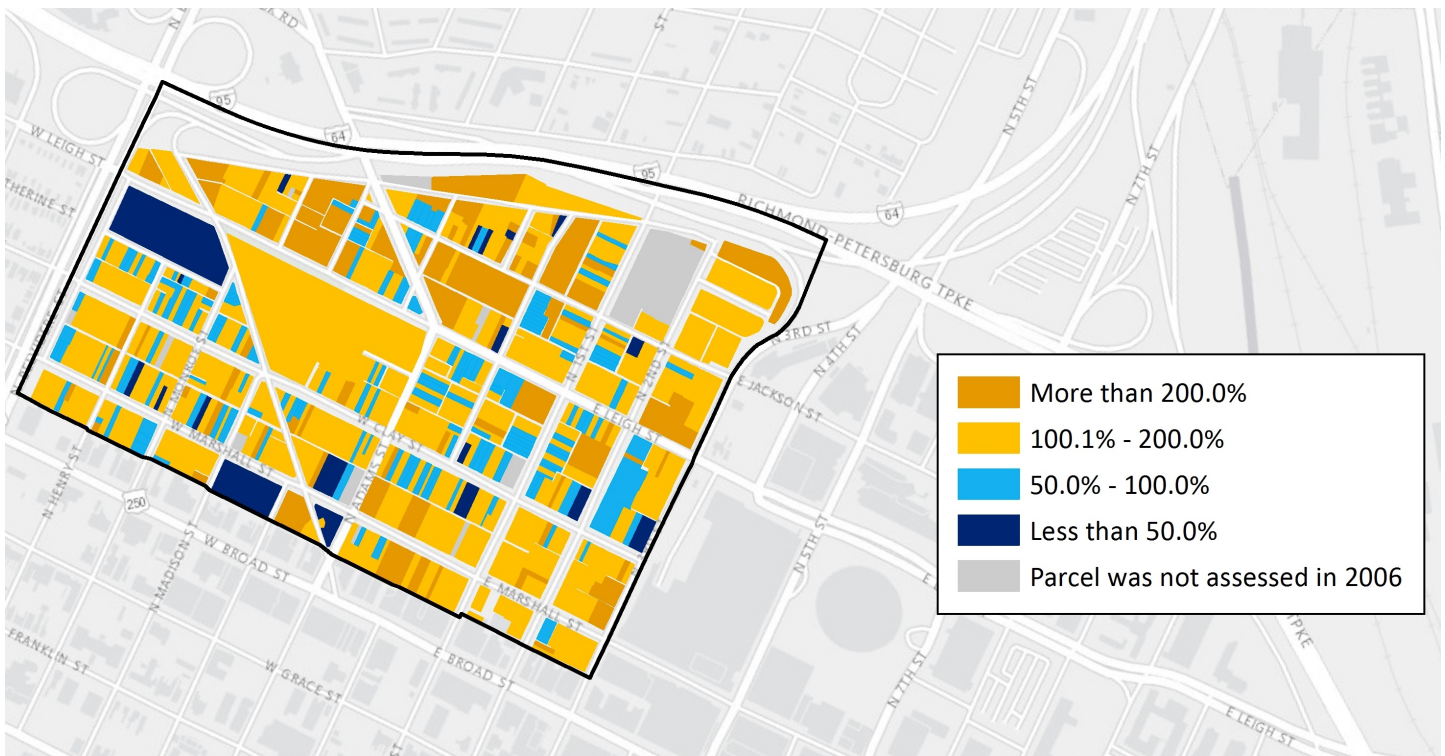
Of the 777 Jackson Ward residential land parcels that were assessed both in FY2006 — immediately following the official end of the NiB program — and in FY2016, 584 (75.2 percent) experienced an increase in nominal assessment value (see Map 2). Of these, 113 parcels (14.5 percent) more than doubled their 2006 assessed value by 2016. One parcel (0.1 percent) experienced no change in nominal assessment value over the 10 year time period and 192 parcels (24.7 percent) had a lower nominal dollar value in FY2016 than in FY2006.

Figure 3: Housing Occupancy in Jackson Ward's Surrounding Census Tract, 1970-2010



Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

Map 2: 2016 Assessment Value as a Percent of 2006 Assessment Value in Jackson Ward



Source: City of Richmond Assessment Data, FY2006-FY2016.

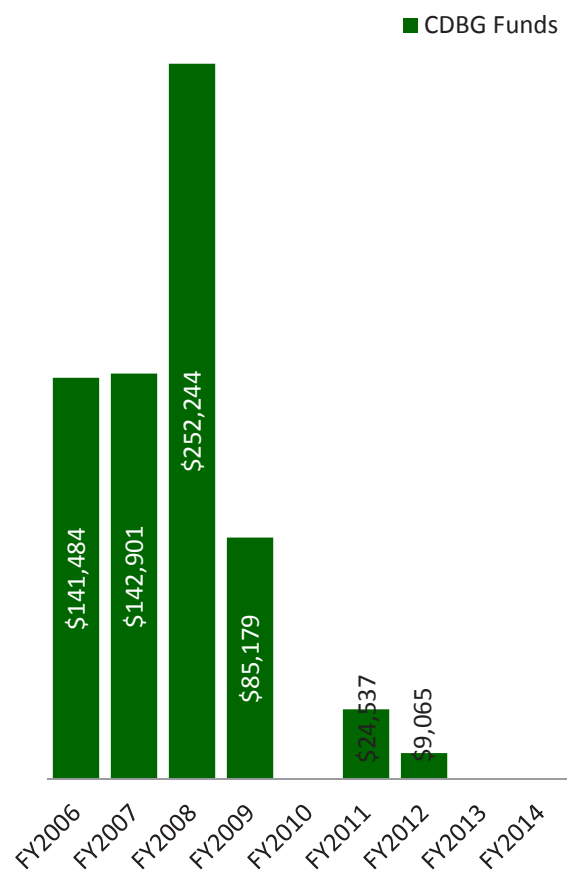


INVESTMENT AFTER NEIGHBORHOODS IN BLOOM

Public Investment

After NiB, the City invested Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding in Jackson Ward, but did not invest HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funding in the neighborhood. Investment in Jackson Ward peaked in FY2008 at \$252,244, but has decreased in recent years. The neighborhood did not receive local fiscal resources in FY2010, 2013 or 2014 (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Local Government Investment in Jackson Ward (FY2006-FY2014)



Source: City of Richmond CAPER Reports, FY2006-FY2014.

Nonprofit Investment

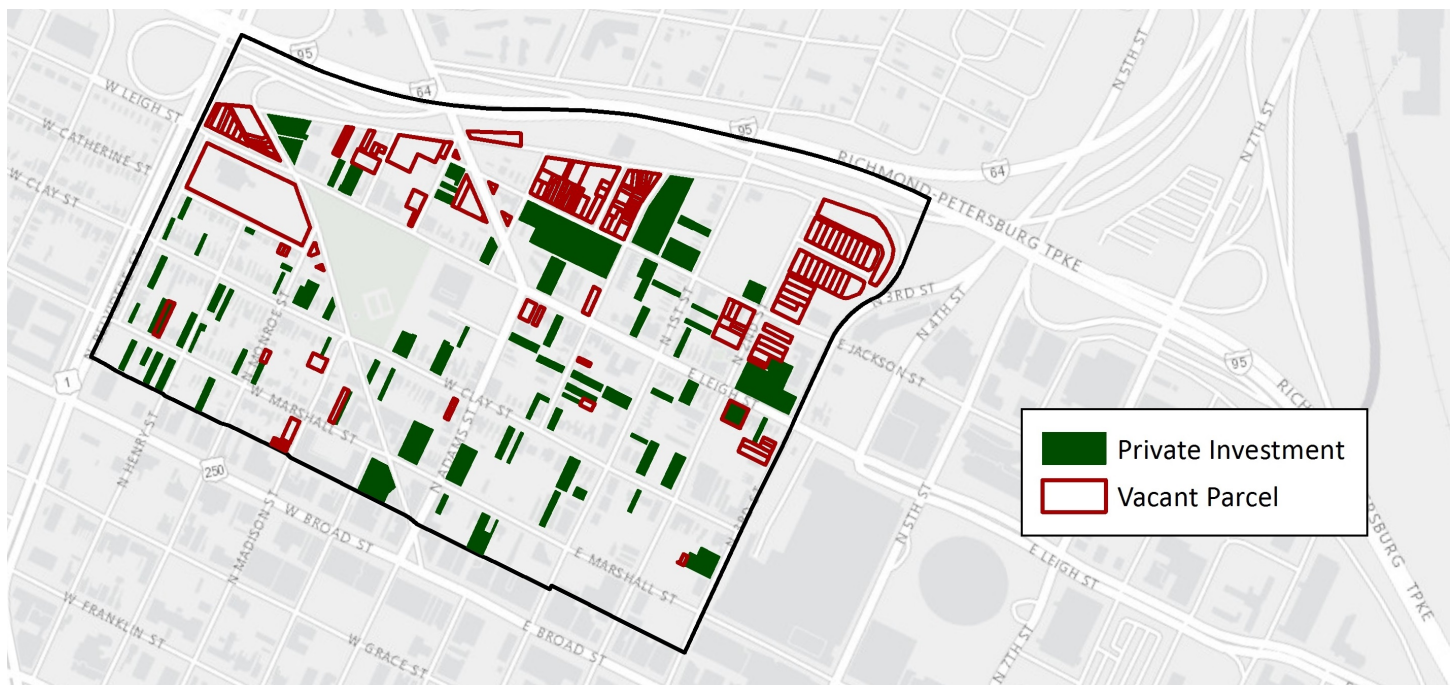
The nonprofit organizations operating in Jackson Ward during NiB included the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA), project:HOMES (formerly ElderHomes), Housing Opportunities Made Equal (H.O.M.E.) and the Historic Jackson Ward Association. These organizations invested in Jackson Ward through the construction of new housing units, the rehabilitation of existing units and the provision of housing counseling services. After the culmination of NiB, sales and building permit data from the City indicate that nonprofit development organizations did not make additional place-based investments in the neighborhood. However, 143 parcels in the neighborhood received private investment through resale and renovations, and H.O.M.E. provided \$3,321 in down payment assistance to one Jackson Ward homeowner.

As of 2016, 14.7 percent of the parcels in the Jackson Ward NiB target area were vacant, which is 2.4 percentage points higher than the overall vacancy rate in the City (see Map 3).² The 2015 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates indicate that 54.3 percent of residents in the census tract containing the Jackson Ward target area are housing-cost burdened, meaning they spend more than 30 percent of their household income on housing costs.³ This figure is 8.4 percentage points above the 45.9 percent of housing cost-burdened residents in the City as a whole.

According to the 2015 ACS 5-year estimates, the census tract that contains the Jackson Ward target area has a median family income of \$45,197 and a poverty rate of 16.6 percent. By comparison, the City has a median family income of \$50,307 and a poverty rate of 19.3 percent.



Map 3: Nonprofit Investment and Vacant Parcels in Jackson Ward (FY2006-FY2015)



Note: This map quantifies investment based on property sales and renovations, and thus may underestimate reinvestment.
 Source: City of Richmond Property Sale Data, Building Permit Data and Land Use Data, FY2006-FY2015.

CONTINUING TO BLOOM: JACKSON WARD TODAY

Commercial development on Broad Street and around Virginia Commonwealth University’s campus has encouraged restaurants, breweries, and bakeries to open in Jackson Ward. Additionally, a biotechnology research park has expanded into the neighborhood.⁴ In 2011, the Hippodrome Theater was reopened as a live performance venue after the historic building – which once hosted the likes of Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington – had fallen into disrepair.⁵ The revival of culturally significant buildings like the Hippodrome serves as both an economic opportunity for the neighborhood and a celebration of its history.

In early 2016, the City approved a \$32 million mixed-use development along the northern border of Jackson Ward, just south of Interstates 95 and 64. The project, to be named Jackson Place, is a collaboration between the City, RRHA and Community Preservation and Development Corporation, a Washington, D.C.-based developer. Of the planned 182 units to be built, 77 will house elderly residents that will be relocated from the aging RRHA housing project Frederick A. Fay Towers in northern Jackson Ward. A majority of the land will be newly developed and a former convent on the lot will be rehabilitated into apartments.

Cover photo by Emily Wavering

Additional Sources: [Vision and History, Historic Jackson Ward](#), • [“Jackson Ward Historic District,” Virginia Commonwealth University Libraries, Digital Collections](#), • [U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service, “Jackson Ward Historic District National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form” \(July 30, 1976\)](#).

1 [“Historic Jackson Ward: Reviving ‘Black Wall Street,’” Community Preservation and Development Corporation](#).

2 The American Community Survey 2015 5-Year Estimates for the City indicate a vacancy rate of 12.3 percent.

3 The share of the population that is housing-cost burdened may be a function of housing supply, housing prices, household incomes and personal preferences.

4 [Burl Rolett, “BioTech park plans \\$18 million expansion,” Richmond BizSense \(June 2, 2013\)](#).

5 [History, The Hippodrome Theater](#).



OREGON HILL



Neighborhoods in Bloom Retrospective

NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY

Oregon Hill, while not as economically challenged as other Neighborhoods in Bloom (NiB) target neighborhoods, has a moderate-income population and a need for historic preservation and revitalization. This working class neighborhood dates back as early as 1817, when business partners attempted to develop the town of Sydney west of the City of Richmond. An economic downturn in 1819 impeded development of the hopeful new town. However, in the mid-to-late 19th century, the expansion of various industries in the area, such as Tredegar Iron Works, Albemarle Paper Company

and the Virginia State Penitentiary, grew the neighborhood organically.

Oregon Hill boasts an understated, yet notable tradition of social involvement. Throughout its history, institutions and individuals promoted social programs for the betterment of the community. Grace Evelyn Arents, the niece of Richmond Tobacco mogul Lewis Ginter, commissioned housing for low-income renters, in addition to churches, schools and libraries in Oregon Hill. A nurse's settlement was constructed in Oregon Hill, which attempted to address the disparity between the health and lives of the rich and poor.

Map 1: Neighborhoods in Bloom Impact and Target Area - Oregon Hill



From 1950 to 1960, Oregon Hill faced the challenge of a migrating population as many individuals moved out of the city to the western suburbs. Richmond’s expansion and urban renewal offered its own set of challenges in the latter half of the 20th century. The 1968 construction of the Richmond Metropolitan Expressway (today Virginia State Route 195 or the Downtown Expressway) cut through the northern portion of Oregon Hill and destroyed nearly 100 homes and businesses. In the same year, two existing academic institutions, the Richmond Professional Institute and the Medical College of Virginia joined to form Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). More recently, university development has moved into Oregon Hill’s neighborhood boundary, demolishing more than 100 of its buildings.

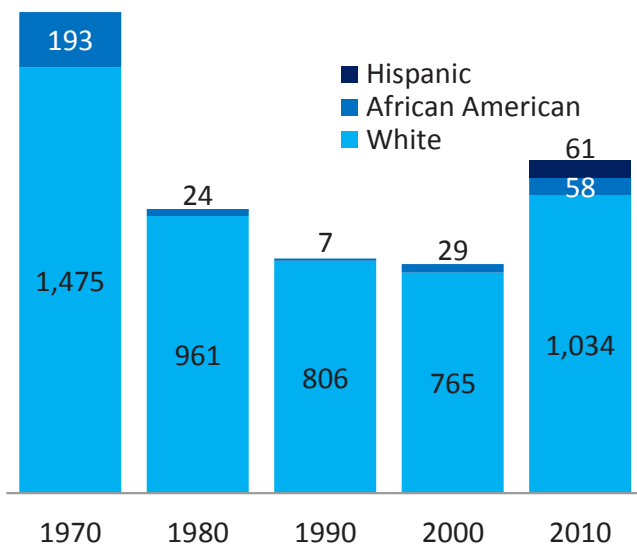
As Oregon Hill did not share the economic challenges of other NiB neighborhoods, the City did not define a target or impact area in the neighborhood. Instead, the

City directed resources to the neighborhood as a whole (see Map 1).

NEIGHBORHOOD CHANGE

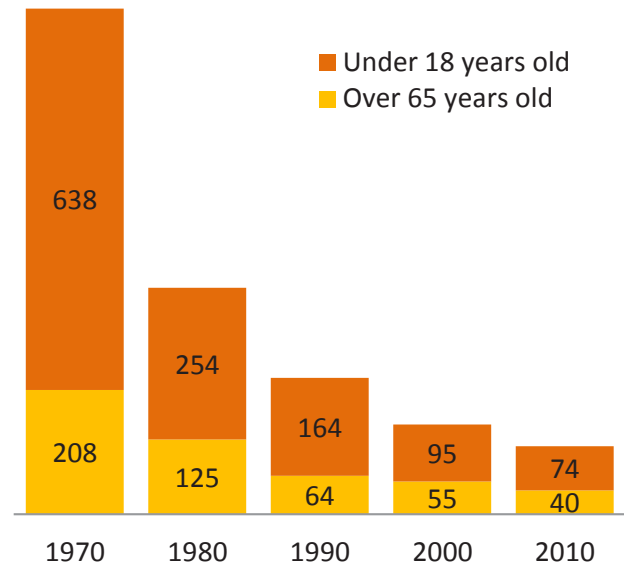
The census tract containing Oregon Hill experienced a population decline of almost 900 individuals from 1970 to 2000, with a population rebound of approximately 360 individuals as of 2010. The area’s residents are predominantly white, and this demographic characteristic has been consistent since 1970 (see Figure 1). As of 2010, the census tract had relatively small, but roughly equivalent populations of African American and Hispanic residents that were each approximately 4.9 percent of the total population. The area has experienced dramatic decreases in the number of residents under 18 and over 65 years old (see Figure 2). The percentage of residents under 18 years old decreased from 37.4 percent in 1970 to 6.3 percent in 2010.

Figure 1: Racial Composition in Oregon Hill’s Surrounding Census Tract, 1970-2010



Note: Sample only includes individuals who self-identify as one race.
Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

Figure 2: Age Composition in Oregon Hill’s Surrounding Census Tract, 1970-2010



Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

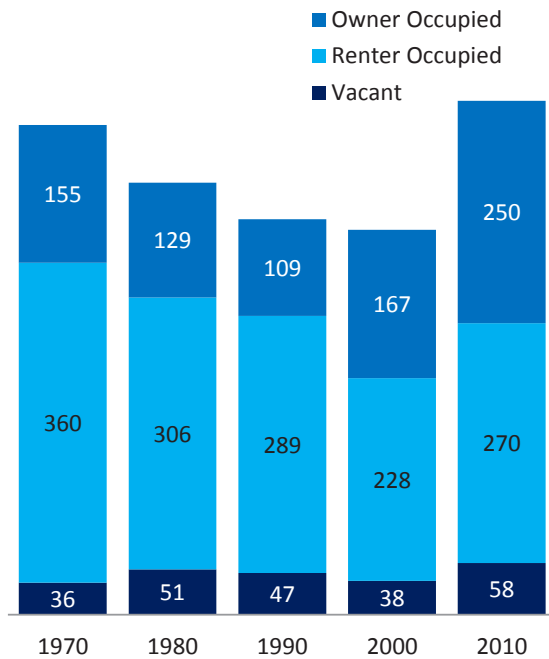
Note: When measuring the investment and impact of NiB in the early 2000s, the City and external researchers defined the Oregon Hill measurement area as the census tract that contained the target area. This profile also uses that definition, and the measurement area includes the following 2010 census tract: 51760041200.



The census tract containing Oregon Hill has consistently had more renter-occupied housing units than owner-occupied housing units (see Figure 3). Decennial data indicate that the tract's percentage of owner-occupied housing units at 43.3 percent was higher in 2010 than in past decennial years. The census tract had its highest percentage of renter-occupied housing units in 1970 at 65.3 percent. By 2010, the percentage of renter-occupied housing units had decreased to 46.7 percent.

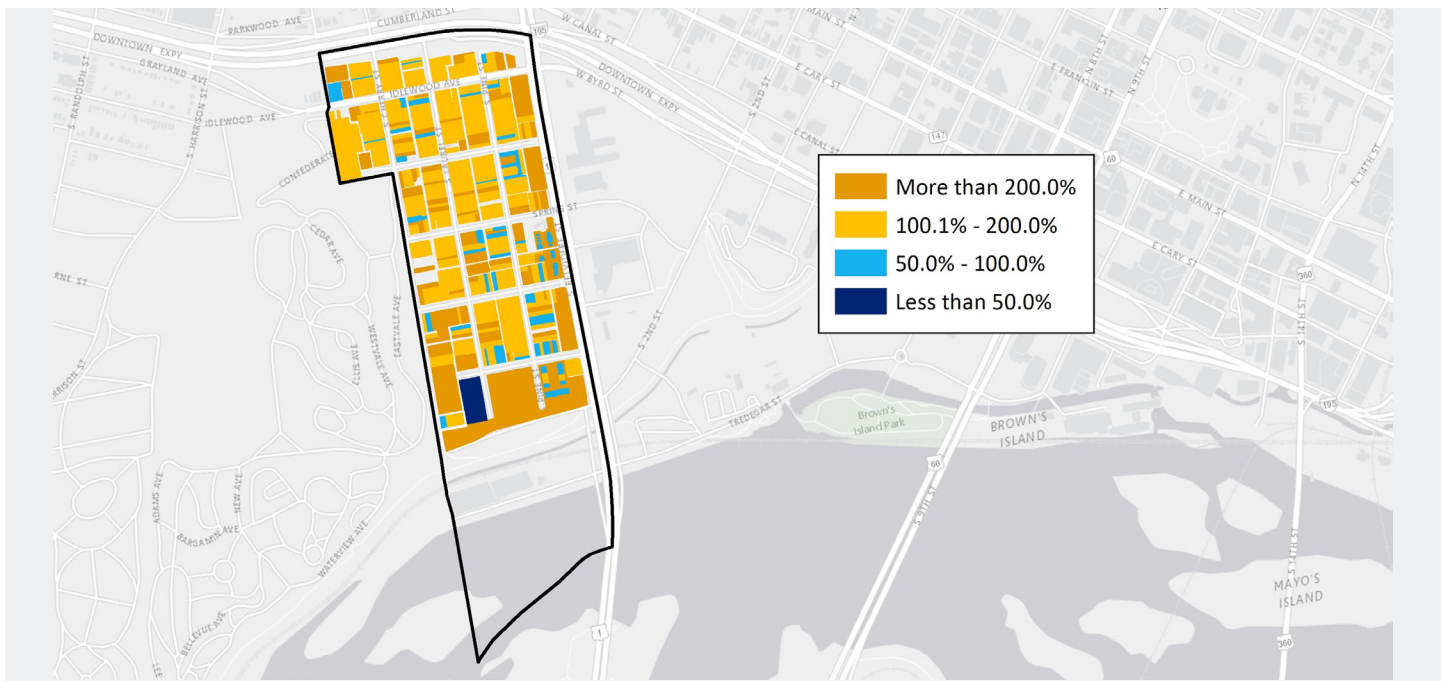
Of the 561 Oregon Hill residential land parcels that were assessed both in FY2006 — immediately following the official end of the NiB program — and in FY2016, 464 (82.7 percent) experienced an increase in nominal assessment value (see Map 2). Of these, 134 parcels (23.9 percent) more than doubled their 2006 assessed value by 2016. One parcel (0.2 percent) experienced no change in nominal assessment value over the 10 year time period and 96 parcels (17.1 percent) had a lower nominal dollar value in FY2016 than in FY2006.

Figure 3: Housing Occupancy in Oregon Hill's Surrounding Census Tract, 1970-2010



Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

Map 2: 2016 Assessment Value as a Percent of 2006 Assessment Value in Oregon Hill



Source: City of Richmond Assessment Data, FY2006-FY2016.



INVESTMENT AFTER NEIGHBORHOODS IN BLOOM

Public Investment

After NiB officially ended, data from the City's Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Reports (CAPERs) from FY2006 to FY2014 indicate that the City did not continue to invest Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) or HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funding in the neighborhood.

Nonprofit Investment

The nonprofit organizations operating in Oregon Hill during NiB included the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA), the Virginia Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and the Oregon Hill Home Improvement Council. After the culmination of NiB, sales and building permit data from the City indicate that nonprofit development organizations did not make additional place-based investments in the neighborhood.

As of 2016, 3.9 percent of the parcels in the Oregon Hill NiB target area were vacant, which is 8.4 percentage points lower than the overall vacancy rate in the City. The 2015 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates indicate that 46.9 percent of residents in the census tract containing the Oregon Hill target area are housing-cost burdened, meaning they spend more than 30 percent of their household income on housing costs. This figure is one percentage point above the 45.4 percent of housing cost-burdened residents in the City as a whole.

Cover photo by Emily Wavering

Additional Sources: [U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service, "Oregon Hill Historic District National Register of Historic Places Registration Form" \(February 5, 1991\).](#)

1 The American Community Survey 2015 5-Year Estimates for the City indicate a vacancy rate of 12.3 percent.

According to the 2015 ACS 5-year estimates, the census tract that contains the Oregon Hill target area has a median family income of \$78,523 and a poverty rate of 13.2 percent. By comparison, the City has a median family income of \$50,307 and a poverty rate of 19.3 percent.

CONTINUING TO BLOOM: OREGON HILL TODAY

Oregon Hill's location and mixed income housing opportunities encouraged steady growth after NiB began in 1999. Restaurants, corner shops, and a few start-ups found a home in Oregon Hill after the economic downturn of 2008. The area is attracting private investment for housing development and rehabilitation, and the Oregon Hill Neighborhood Association (OHNA) actively engages developers to ensure new or renovated housing will maintain the neighborhood's historic character.

In 2012, a private developer proposed converting an abandoned commercial building into 24 high-end apartments. OHNA initially opposed the plan, citing residents' apprehension of potential student tenants from nearby VCU. By 2013, the developer and OHNA agreed on a revised plan to create a 12-unit apartment complex with policies restricting college student rental, and to construct a single family home on an adjacent lot. The resulting apartment building, Victory Lofts, began leasing in January 2014.

2 The share of the population that is housing-cost burdened may be a function of housing supply, housing prices, household incomes and personal preferences.

3 [David Larter, "Victory for Oregon Hill apartments plan," Richmond BizSense \(January 8, 2013\).](#)



SOUTHERN BARTON HEIGHTS



Neighborhoods in Bloom Retrospective

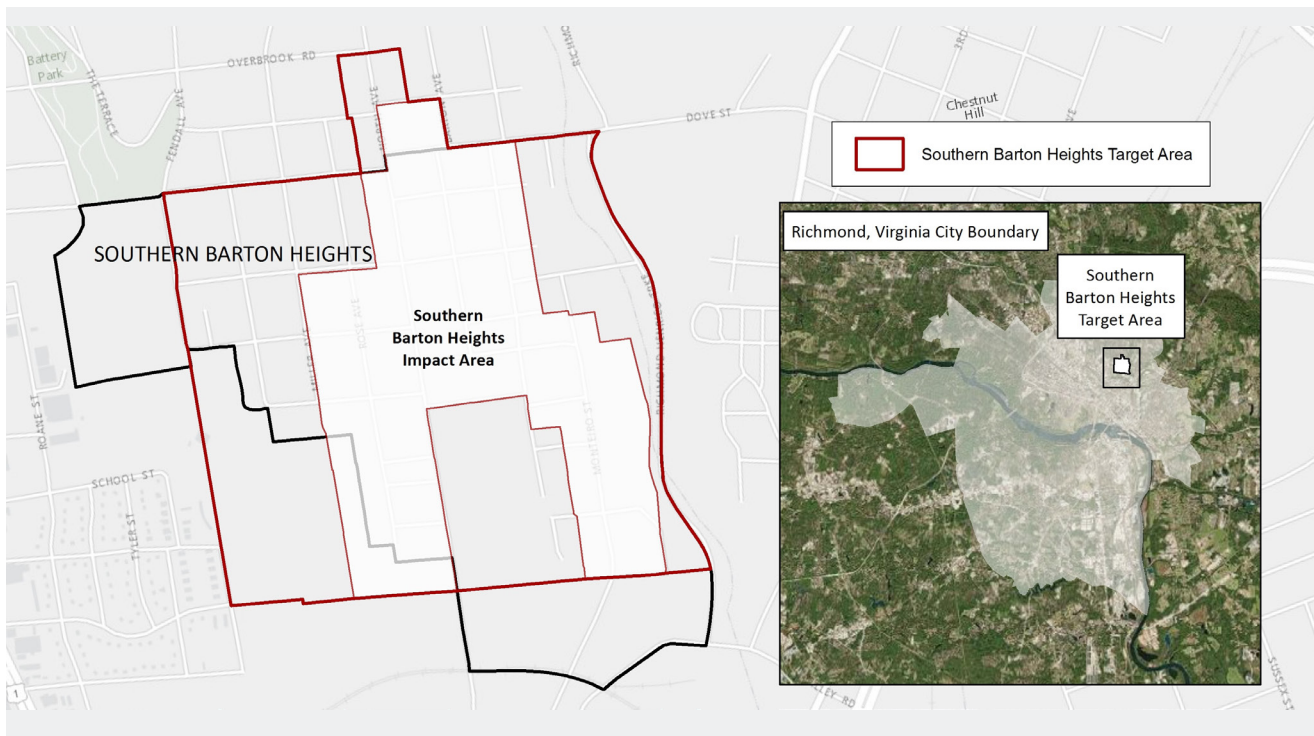
NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY

The north Richmond neighborhood of Southern Barton Heights attracted the City’s business class at the end of the 19th century with its overlook of the Bacon Quarter Branch ravine and Shockoe Creek. The neighborhood’s founder, James H. Barton, worked to create a well-developed neighborhood by attracting middle-class laborers with a “pay-to-own” model. Merchants, entrepreneurs, and lawyers predominantly speculated on the land in the neighborhood’s early years. Following the destruction of the Civil War, the business community

agreed to reinvent the neighborhood by introducing industrial and commercial economies.

James Barton also endorsed the construction of a streetcar line that connected residents of Southern Barton Heights to the heart of downtown Richmond. By 1889, landowners were riding this groundbreaking technology into and out of the northern suburbs. Although Southern Barton Heights was a predominantly white neighborhood at its inception, African American residents began to settle in the area by the end of the 19th century. Many prominent Richmond business owners remained in Southern Barton Heights

Map 1: Neighborhoods in Bloom Impact and Target Areas – Southern Barton Heights

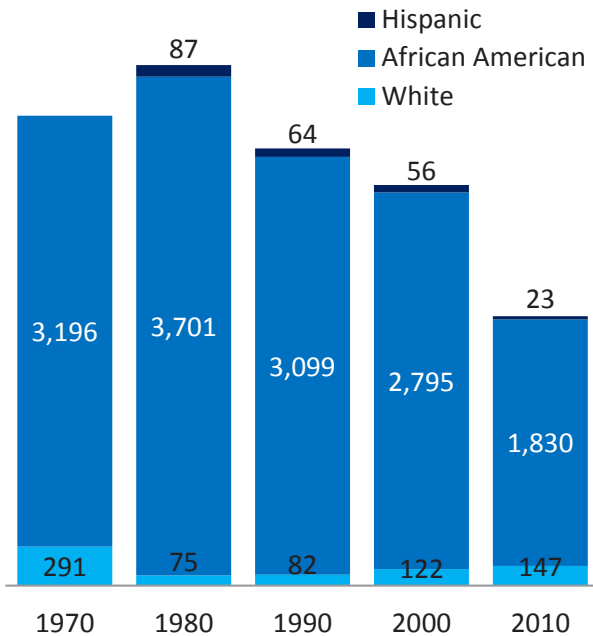


throughout the first half of the 20th century. By 2000, Southern Barton Heights was experiencing vacancy and poverty rates above the City average. In 1995, the City had collaborated with the Southern Barton Heights Community Association to create a revitalization plan for the neighborhood. In 2002, the plan was amended to encourage mixed-income development. Both the original and revised master plans designated most of the neighborhood for single-family residential use with limited tracts for multi-family housing.¹ However, the 2002 amendment included small swatches of land on the neighborhood’s western boundary for commercial and industrial use, and the addition of an “economic opportunity area” to encourage investment in the southwestern corner of the community.²

NEIGHBORHOOD CHANGE

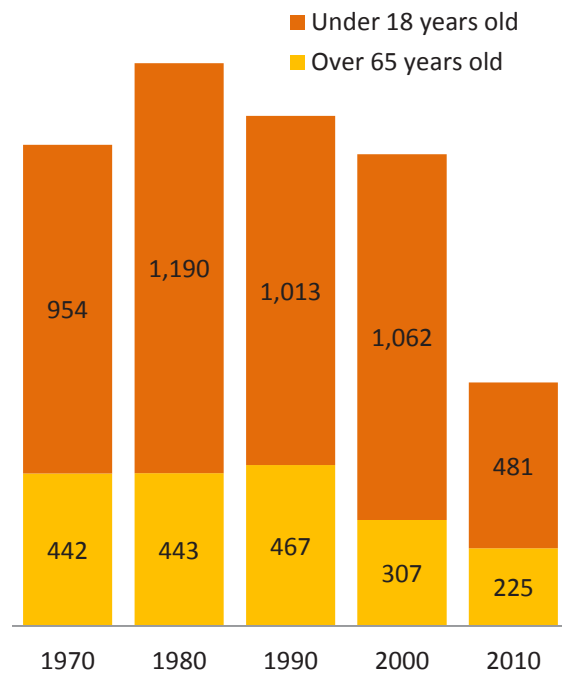
The census tract containing the Southern Barton Heights target area experienced slight population growth from 1970 to 1980, followed by population decline of 1,782 residents from 1980 to 2010. The area has consistently been predominantly African American since 1970, and as of the 2010 census, 91.6 percent of area residents were African American (see Figure 1). On average, 31.6 percent of area residents were under the age of 18 from 1970 to 2000, which decreased to 4.1 percent by 2010 (see Figure 2). Similarly, although the number of residents over the age of 65 has decreased in recent years, these individuals have consistently been between 10 percent and 13 percent of the tract’s population.

Figure 1: Racial Composition in Southern Barton Heights’ Surrounding Census Tract, 1970-2010



Note: Sample only includes individuals who self-identify as one race.
Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

Figure 2: Age Composition in Southern Barton Heights’ Surrounding Census Tract, 1970-2010



Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

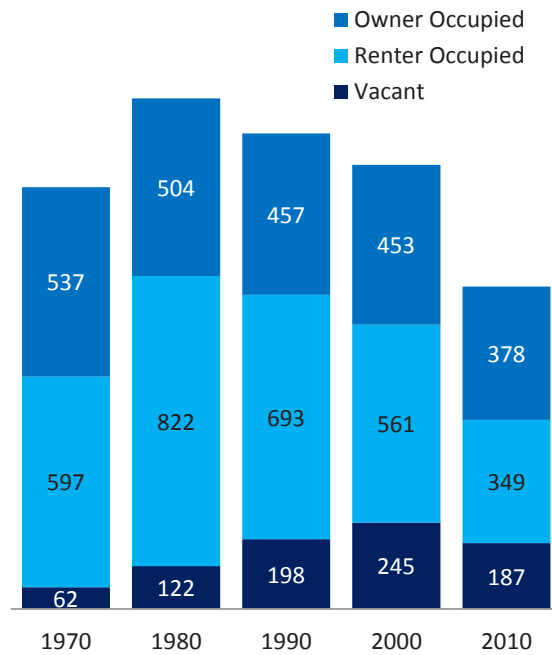
Note: When measuring the investment and impact of NiB in the early 2000s, the City and external researchers defined the Southern Barton Heights measurement area as the census tract that contained the target area. This profile also uses that definition, and the measurement area includes the following 2010 census tract: 51760011000.



In recent years, the census tract containing Southern Barton Heights has experienced a decline in the number of housing units, particularly the number of renter-occupied housing units (see Figure 3). As of 2010, 41.4 percent of the tract's 914 housing units were owner-occupied and 38.2 percent were renter-occupied. The percentage of vacant housing units in the census tract has steadily increased since 1970, and peaked at 20.5 percent in 2010.³

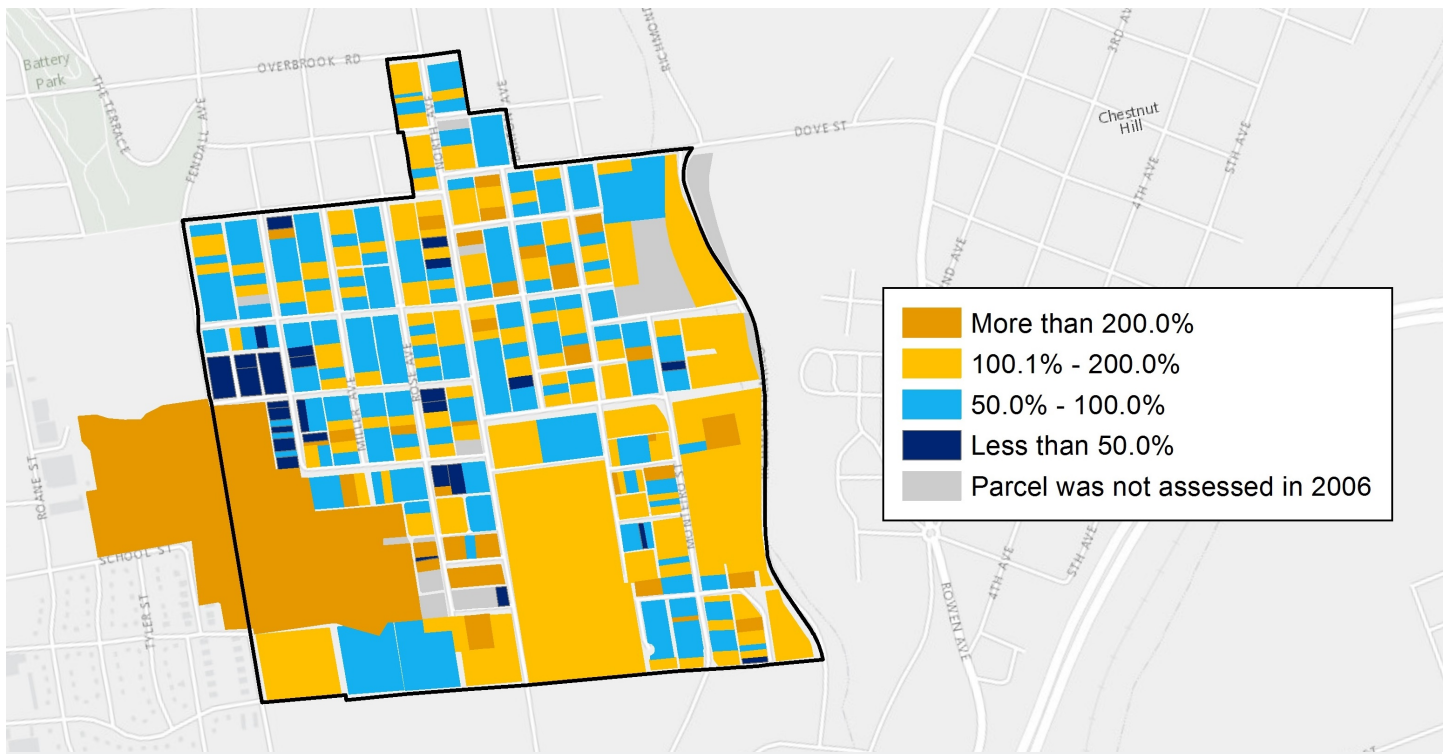
Of the 417 Southern Barton Heights residential land parcels that were assessed both in FY2006 — immediately following the official end of the NiB program — and in FY2016, 196 (47.0 percent) experienced an increase in nominal assessment value (see Map 2). Of these, 44 parcels (10.6 percent) more than doubled their 2006 assessed value by 2016. One parcel (0.2 percent) experienced no change in nominal assessment value over the 10 year time period and 220 parcels (52.8 percent) had a lower nominal dollar value in FY2016 than in FY2006.

Figure 3: Housing Occupancy in Southern Barton Heights' Surrounding Census Tract, 1970-2010



Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

Map 2: 2016 Assessment Value as a Percent of 2006 Assessment Value in Southern Barton Heights



Source: City of Richmond Assessment Data, FY2006-FY2016.

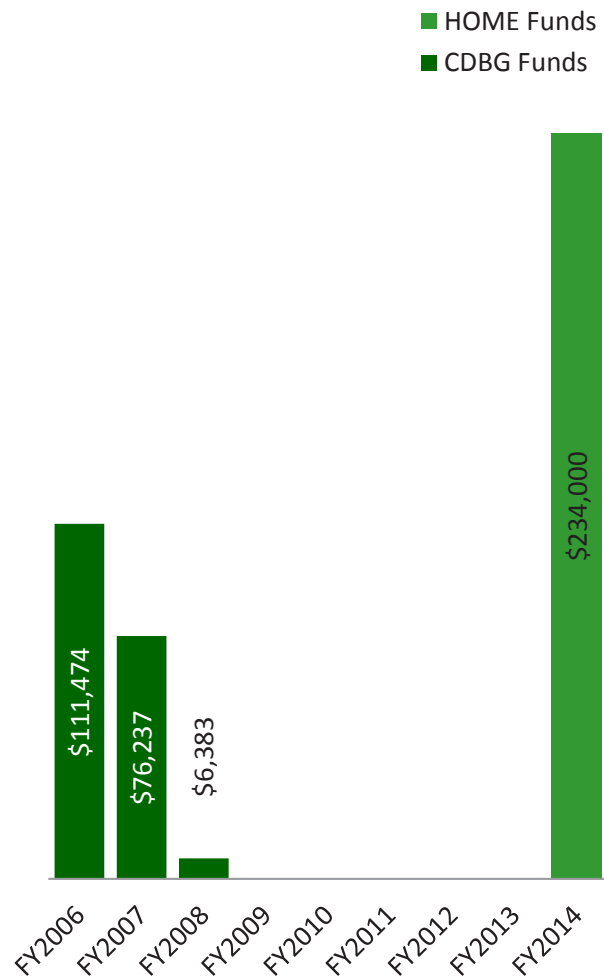


INVESTMENT AFTER NEIGHBORHOODS IN BLOOM

Public Investment

After NiB officially ended, the City continued to make limited investments in Southern Barton Heights using Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funding. Investment in Southern Barton Heights peaked in FY2014 at \$234,000, but the neighborhood did not receive public investment from FY2009 to FY2013 (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Local Government Investment in Southern Barton Heights (FY2006-FY2014)



Source: City of Richmond CAPER Reports, FY2006-FY2014.

Nonprofit Investment

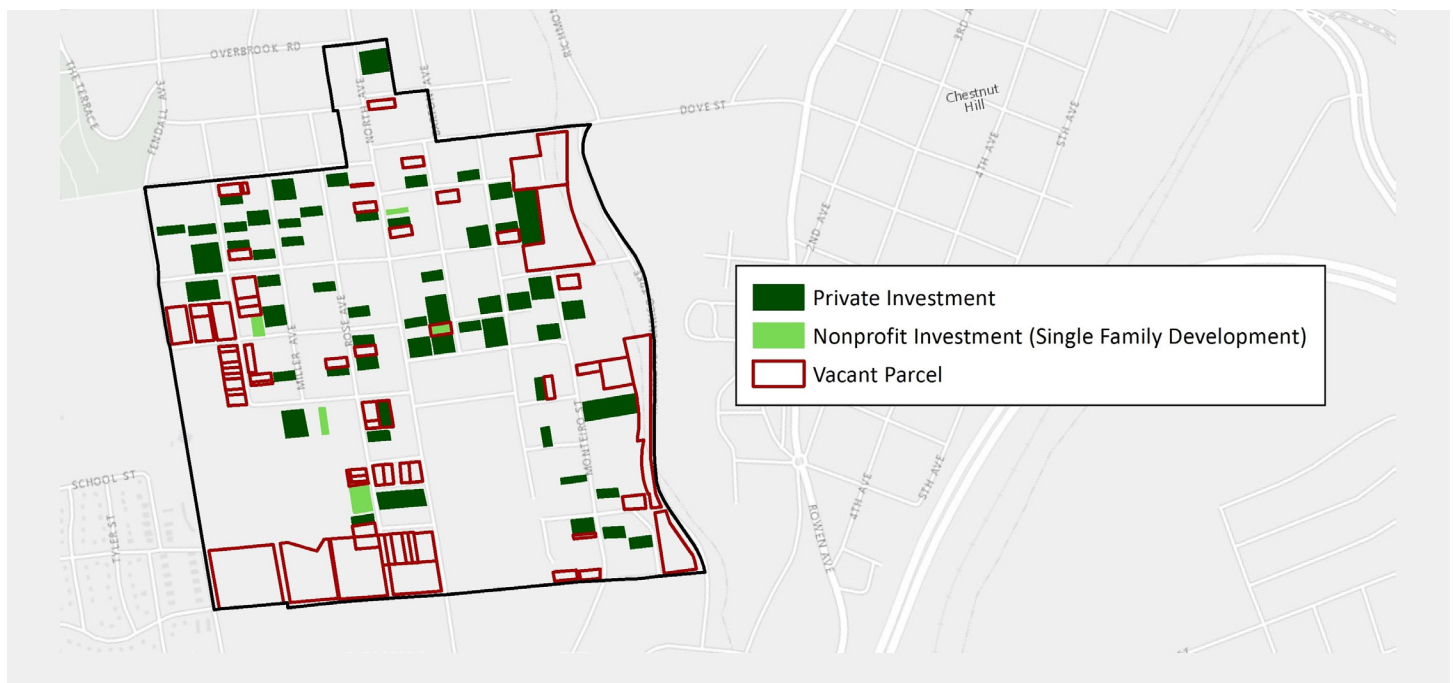
The nonprofit organizations operating in Southern Barton Heights during NiB included the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA), Housing Opportunities Made Equal (H.O.M.E.), Neighborhood Housing Services of Richmond and the Southern Barton Heights Community Association. These organizations invested in Southern Barton Heights through the construction of new housing units, the rehabilitation of existing units and the provision of housing counseling services. After the culmination of NiB, sales and building permit data from the City indicate that nonprofit development organizations invested approximately \$870,304 in seven Southern Barton Heights parcels and H.O.M.E. provided approximately \$23,075 in down payment assistance to three Southern Barton Heights homeowners.

As of 2016, 14.9 percent of the parcels in the Southern Barton Heights NiB target area were vacant, which is 2.6 percentage points higher than the overall vacancy rate in the City (see Map 3).⁴ The 2015 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates indicate that 56.2 percent of residents in the census tract containing the Southern Barton Heights target area are housing-cost burdened, meaning they spend more than 30 percent of their household income on housing costs.⁵ This figure is 10.3 percentage points above the 45.9 percent of housing cost-burdened residents in the City as a whole.

According to the 2015 ACS 5-year estimates, the census tract that contains the Southern Barton Heights target area has a median family income of \$40,147 and a poverty rate of 24.3 percent. By comparison, the City has a median family income of \$50,307 and a poverty rate of 19.3 percent.



Map 3: Nonprofit Investment and Vacant Parcels in Southern Barton Heights (FY2006-FY2015)



Note: This map quantifies investment based on property sales and renovations, and thus may underestimate reinvestment.
 Source: City of Richmond Property Sale Data, Building Permit Data and Land Use Data, FY2006-FY2015.

CONTINUING TO BLOOM: SOUTHERN BARTON HEIGHTS TODAY

In 2014, a private company called Ark Construction, which specializes in historic rehabilitations, purchased the abandoned mansion of neighborhood founder James H. Barton. The building, which was used throughout the 20th century as a sanitarium and nursing home, had fallen into serious disrepair despite

its historical significance. Ark Construction hopes to transform the building into an 18-unit apartment building and as of 2016, the City had adopted a rezoning ordinance that authorized the site for multifamily dwelling.^{6,7}

Cover photo by Emily Wavering

Additional Sources: [U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service, "Town of Barton Heights Historic District National Register of Historic Places Registration Form" \(October, 1990\).](#)

1 [City of Richmond Planning and Community Development, "The Southern Barton Heights Revitalization Plan" \(September, 1994\).](#)

2 [City of Richmond Department of Community Development Division of Comprehensive Planning, "Southern Barton Heights Master Plan Amendments" \(September 3, 2002\).](#)

3 Numbers may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

4 The American Community Survey 2015 5-Year Estimates for the City indicate a vacancy rate of 12.3 percent.

5 The share of the population that is housing-cost burdened may be a function of housing supply, housing prices, household incomes and personal preferences.

6 [Ned Oliver, "Rotting Mansion in Barton Heights to Get New Life," Style Weekly \(July 15, 2014\).](#)

7 ["Barton Mansion Property Could Become Apartments, Coffee Shop," Brookland Park Post \(December 31, 2015\).](#)



NiB



Neighborhoods In Bloom



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