

The Richmond Land Bank Annual Plan July 2020 — June 2021



A program of The Maggie Walker Community Land Trust



Background

On February 26th, 2018, Richmond City Council adopted an ordinance designating The Maggie Walker Community Land Trust to serve as the land bank for the City of Richmond.

This designation was made possible when the Virginia General Assembly passed legislation in 2016 that enabled the creation or designation of land banks by localities across the state. That legislation, the Land Bank Entities Act, was formally signed into law by Governor Terry McAuliffe.

The Maggie Walker Community Land Trust is the first community land trust in the nation to be designated a land bank. While the missions of land trusts and land banks are unique, they naturally complement one another by accelerating equitable development and stewardship of land throughout communities.

COVER IMAGE

Vacant homes on the 300 block of Preston Street near Gilpin Court (via staff)

Acknowledgements

This plan would not have been possible without knowledge and guidance from:

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INTRODUCTION

The Maggie Walker Community Land Trust is pleased to provide the following updates to our Annual Plan for 2020-2021. The Land Bank celebrated a number of milestones this year, including: convening the Citizens' Advisory Panel in the first meetings attended by members of the public, finalizing procedural documents, designating the land use for 12 properties, receiving its first 4 property purchase applications from qualified entities, and engaging in several efforts for more focused engagement for the end use of a number of properties.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2019-2020 YEAR: THE LAND BANK DESIGNATED AND TRANS- FERRED ITS FIRST PROPERTIES.

The Land Bank successfully designated and transferred 4 properties to qualified not-for-profit entities in the Spring of 2020. These first 4 properties in the Church Hill area will become affordable homeownership and rental opportunities for Richmond residents. The Land Bank has expressed its goal to receive and repurpose 50-100 vacant, blighted, tax delinquent, or surplus properties per year over the next three years. This scale of activity is critical in order to achieve the objective of positive neighborhood impact.

FIRST DONATION PROPERTY.

The Land Bank received its first land donation: a former Bank of America building located in Northside. Land Bank staff is currently engaging with Storefront for Community Design to develop a strategy for engagement around the future use of this building.

PARTNERED WITH HISTORIC RICHMOND TO EXPLORE HOLDINGS IN NORTH JACKSON WARD .

The Land Bank has partnered with Historic Richmond for the exciting opportunity to craft an exploratory area plan for the 14 parcels in North Jackson Ward transferred by the city in 2019. The Land Bank has engaged with consultants to do community-driven visioning around the future of this neighborhood, and the final plan is expected by December 2020.

INCREASED DIRECT SALE ACTIVITY.

The relationship and processes with the City regarding the transfer of property through "direct sale" (as an alternative to auction) has been developing during the past year. A number of issues remain to be fully worked through in order to accelerate the flow of properties to the Land Bank.

CLOSING WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY.

Real estate market conditions have added urgency to increasing the flow of properties to the bank. As the City's housing market has gotten stronger, the number of properties on

the tax delinquent list has rapidly decreased. The number of long-term tax delinquent parcels diminished by more than 50% over the past twelve months, to fewer than 900.

There are several reasons for this: first, as values rise, more owners are seeing the wisdom in catching up their delinquent taxes on a property that now has significant value; second, there are numerous private buyers in the marketplace that are looking to acquire property in a rising market. They are approaching owners that have been unable or unwilling to pay taxes and offering cash to pay the taxes and purchase the property.

While increased interest from investors does have some positive aspects, we have heard repeated concerns from the community that some “house flipping” is dramatically increasing home prices and making the neighborhood unaffordable to long-time residents. Some other investors simply hold property to benefit from increasing values—this strategy also does not benefit the neighborhood as vacancy and blight persist.

CITIZENS’ ADVISORY PANEL CONVENES.

Building off of the first organizational meetings held in 2018-2019, the fully convened Citizens’ Advisory Panel held its first public meetings in Fall of 2019.

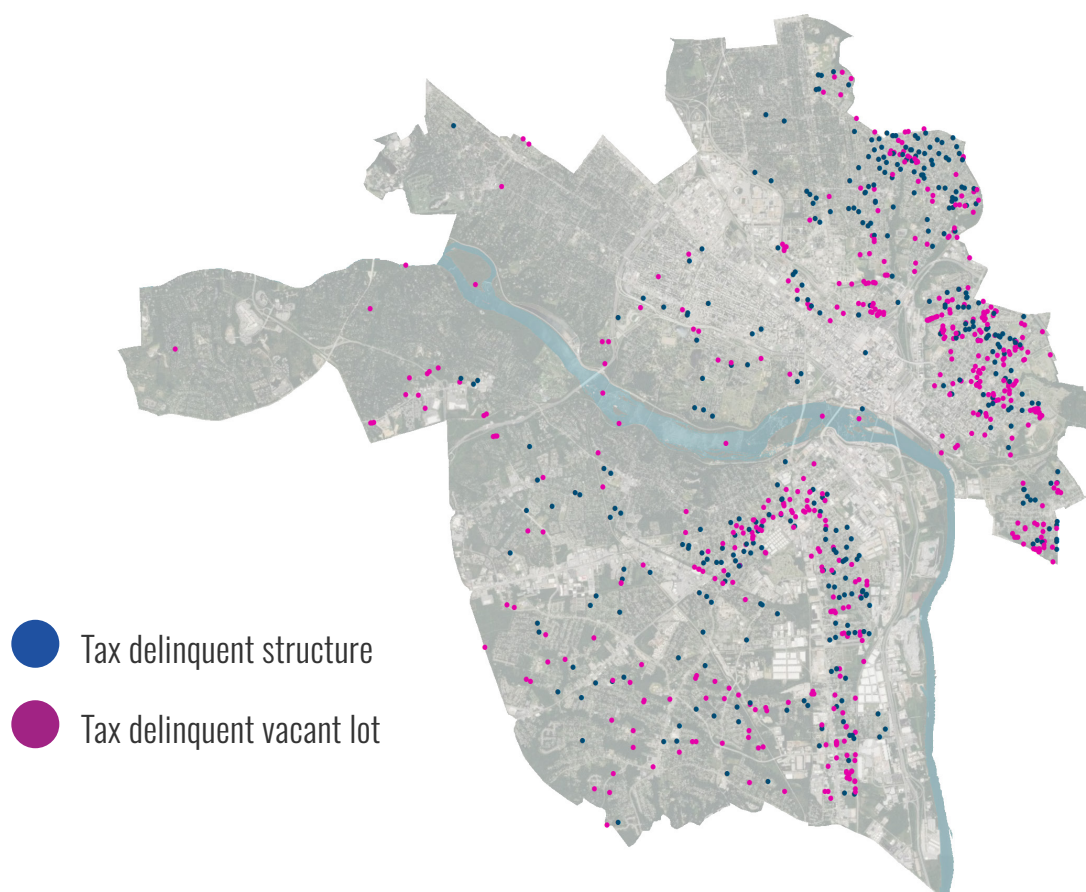


FIGURE 01: Long-term tax delinquent properties, June 2020

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2019-2020 ANNUAL PLAN UPDATE:

VISION AND GOALS RETAINED.

The Vision, Goals and major Objectives remain unchanged. There have been some modifications to strategies, including the removal of strategies that have been completed.

SAME PRIORITY NEIGHBORHOODS.

The prioritized neighborhoods and the prioritized criteria remain unchanged. These five prioritized census tracts in the East End, Highland Park and Swansboro will continue to represent at least 60% of the properties that we request from the City. These areas still hold the highest concentrations of seriously tax delinquent properties in the City.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA UPDATED.

The plan updates the former provision that specified only qualified not-for-profit organizations were eligible to receive properties, to include for-profit entities and individuals. The CAP will determine the rubric allowing these new entities to receive properties.

FIGURE 02: Properties held and requested by the Richmond Land Bank, June 2020

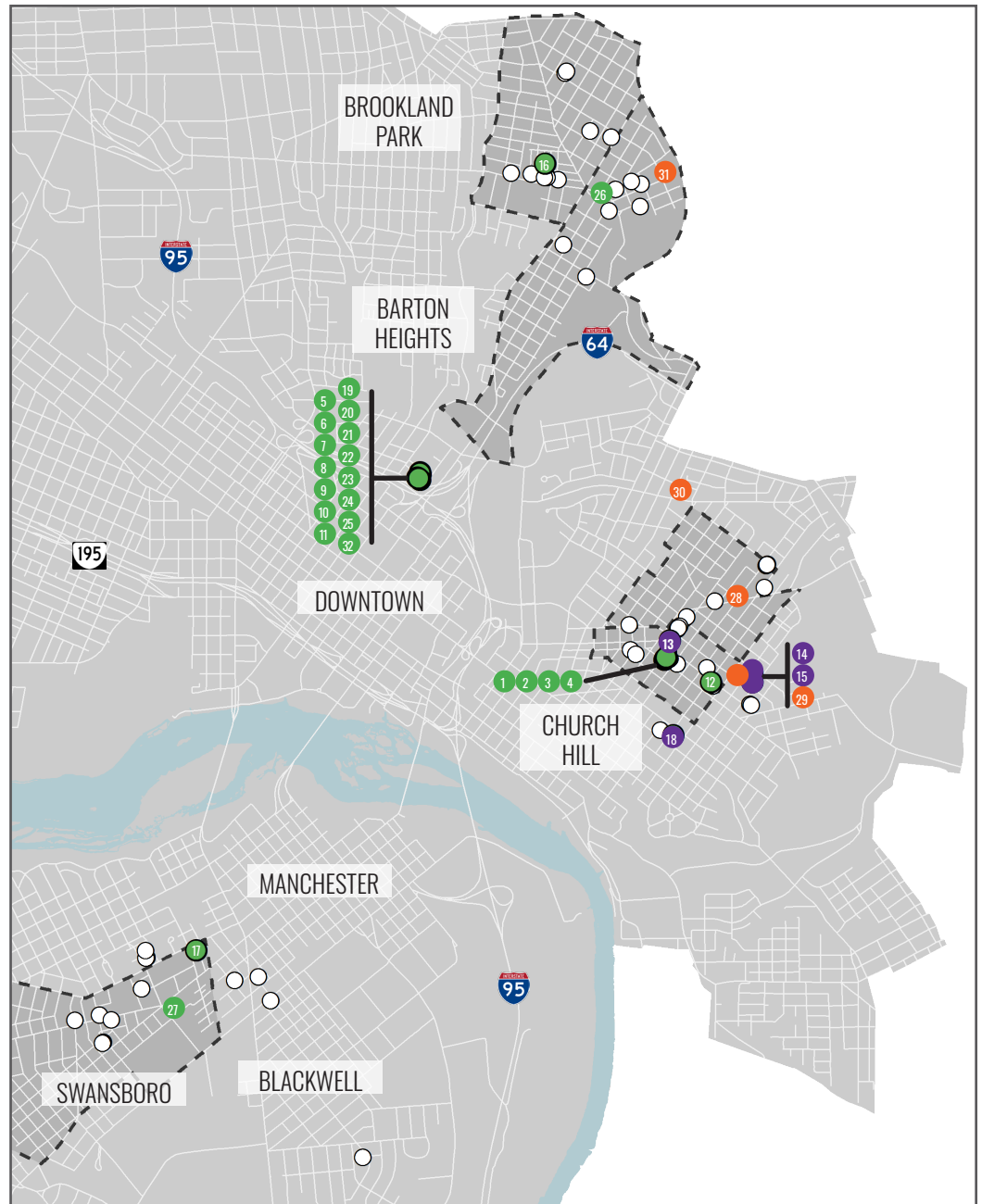
- 1 1001 N 26th St
Vacant lot
- 2 1005 N 26th St
Vacant lot
- 3 1007 N 26th St
Vacant lot
- 4 1009 N 26th St
Vacant lot
- 5 302 E Preston St
Vacant lot
- 6 304 E Preston St
Single-family home
- 7 306 E Preston St
Single-family home
- 8 307 E Preston St
Single-family home
- 9 307½ E Preston St
Vacant lot
- 10 309 E Preston St
Vacant lot
- 11 311 E Preston St
Vacant lot
- 12 1029 N 30th St
Vacant lot
- 13 1108 N 26th St
Vacant lot
- 14 1206 N 33rd St
Vacant lot
- 15 1223 N 32nd St
Vacant lot
- 16 3113 Veranda Ave
Vacant lot
- 17 42 W 21st St
Vacant lot
- 18 615 N 30th St
Vacant lot
- 19 1001 N 3rd St
Vacant lot
- 20 1005 N 3rd St
Vacant lot
- 21 1007 N 3rd St
Vacant lot
- 22 1009 N 3rd St
Vacant lot
- 23 1011 N 3rd St
Vacant lot
- 24 303 E Bates St
Vacant lot

- 25 305 E Bates St
Vacant lot
- 26 1307 E Brookland Park Blvd
Former Bank of America Bldg
- 27 1 E 25th St
Single-family home
- 28 1608 N 28th St
Vacant lot
- 29 1208½ N 32nd St
Vacant lot

- 30 2006 Carver St
Vacant lot
- 31 1624 Pollock St
Vacant lot
- 32 1002 N 3rd St
Vacant lot

LAND BANK
PRIORITY
NEIGHBORHOODS

- Received, Undesignated
- Use Designated by CAP
All designated properties are for
Affordable Housing as of June 2020
- Disposition in Progress
4 properties designated for affordable
housing have been awarded by MWCLT
- Additional Tax Delinquent
Properties
Requested from the City of Richmond



LAND BANK PLAN FOR 2020-2021

Our vision:

The Richmond Land Bank will provide a **strategic, streamlined, and transparent** method for repurposing vacant and tax delinquent property into assets that address community needs and desires.

GOAL 1: *Strategic* transformation of property in accordance with community needs.

This goal sets the main and subordinate priorities of the Land Bank, along with criteria for prioritization of communities within the City. It also prescribes the Land Bank's approaches for strategic land retention, and deliberative end use.

OBJECTIVE 1.1

The main priority of the Land Bank will be the creation of affordable housing.

The need for abundant, affordable homes in Richmond is significantly expanding. The Land Bank will leverage its land stewardship with the City's strong network of affordable housing developers to increase the supply and financial attainability of homes within for low-income Richmond households. While the Richmond Land Bank is a program of MWCLT, a housing provider for affordable homeownership opportunities, the Land Bank prioritizes both rental and homeownership development. The Land Bank recognizes the need for affordable rental housing in Richmond, especially for extremely low-income families, and is working to promote this development.

STRATEGY 1.1.1

Ensuring perpetual affordability. As a program of MWCLT, the Land Bank is in a unique position to support the creation of permanently affordable housing opportunities.

- a. **Direct retention in CLT:** The Land Bank will help promote permanent affordability by immediately retaining at least 25% of properties in the community land trust shared-equity model.

MWCLT will develop new or rehabilitated homes on these properties made available to households earning no more than 100% of the current Area Median Income (AMI) for the Richmond, VA MSA¹ (or lower as perscribed in **STRATEGY 1.1.2**).

- b. **Indirect retention in CLT.** MWCLT will partner with other nonprofit housing developers who receive Land Bank properties to provide the option of keeping the land under newly constructed or rehabilitated homes within MWCLT's stewardship. These homes

¹ The Richmond, VA MSA contains the following areas: Amelia County, VA; Caroline County, VA; Charles City County, VA; Chesterfield County, VA; Dinwiddie County, VA; Goochland County, VA; Hanover County, VA; Henrico County, VA; King William County, VA; New Kent County, VA; Powhatan County, VA; Prince George County, VA; Sussex County, VA; Colonial Heights city, VA; Hopewell city, VA; Petersburg city, VA; and Richmond city, VA.

How can the Richmond Land Bank promote more affordable homes?

For households earning . . .

Below 30% AMI

30% area median income for the Richmond, VA MSA:

\$18,800

1-person household

\$21,450

2-person household

\$26,800

4-person household

30% to 50% AMI

50% area median income for the Richmond, VA MSA:

\$31,300

1-person household

\$35,800

2-person household

\$44,700

4-person household

50% to 80% AMI

80% area median income for the Richmond, VA MSA:

\$50,050

1-person household

\$57,200

2-person household

\$71,500

4-person household

80% to 100% AMI

100% area median income for the Richmond, VA MSA:

\$62,600

1-person household

\$71,500

2-person household

\$89,400

4-person household

. . . the Land Bank can:

- Acquire and assemble parcels for affordable multifamily rental development.
 - Require recipient entities that develop rental housing to accept Housing Choice Vouchers to increase affordability.
 - Utilize direct retention of properties in the Community Land Trust to ensure permanent affordability.
 - Identify properties for organizations that do permanent supportive housing
-
- Acquire and assemble parcels for affordable multifamily rental development.
 - Solicit proposals for development of deeply-subsidized apartment homes, offering land at reduced cost to help keep rents low.
 - Require recipient entities that develop rental housing to accept Housing Choice Vouchers to increase affordability.
 - Partner with nonprofits like Habitat for Humanity that develop homes affordable to very low-income households.
 - Utilize direct retention of properties in the Community Land Trust to ensure permanent affordability.
-
- Acquire vacant lots available for single-family and low-density new residential construction, as well as unoccupied, dilapidated structures available for repair and rehabilitation.
 - Transfer land or homes at reduced cost to nonprofit CDCs to leverage existing rental and homeownership subsidy programs targeted below 80% AMI.
 - Retain a portion of owner-occupied homes in the CLT model to provide perpetual affordability.
-
- Acquire vacant lots available for single-family and new residential construction, as well as unoccupied, dilapidated structures available for repair and rehabilitation.
 - Target high-value neighborhoods for homeownership opportunities to households ineligible for <80% AMI programs, but still in need of additional assistance.
 - Retain a significant portion of owner-occupied homes in the CLT model to provide perpetual affordability.

(AMI limits from HUD, April 2020)

would also enter into the land trust model for permanent affordability. (See example in **FIGURE 03.**)

STRATEGY 1.1.2

Additional affordability requirements. The Land Bank may enforce other requirements for housing affordability in accordance with statutory, regulatory, and/or voluntary requirements as described below.

a. Statutory and regulatory requirements:

Virginia law: When the Land Bank receives a tax delinquent property from the City via the direct sale method, certain state regulations apply (**Va. Code § 58.1-3970.1**). For properties with a current assessment between \$75,000 and \$150,000, the recipient entity (which may be MWCLT) must use the property for affordable homeownership to a buyer with a household income no more than 100% of AMI.

Funding requirements: If the Land Bank or a recipient entity utilizes certain federal, state, or local grants, these funding sources may have separate affordability requirements. Most nonprofit community development corporations in the Richmond region utilize federal grants that limit their clients to households earning no more than 80% of AMI (e.g., CDBG and HOME). Affordable homeownership opportunities using these

programs are encouraged to use the CLT model.

b. Other requirements:

For direct sale properties assessed below \$75,000, the Land Bank may apply affordability guidelines with wide discretion. These affordability requirements will depend on the type of property and identified final use as determined by the Citizens' Advisory Panel. The CAP may establish affordability requirements



In 2018, Richmond Metropolitan Habitat for Humanity and project:HOMES began rehabilitating over 30 homes in the Maymont and Randolph neighborhoods to sell to buyers earning below 80% AMI. Previously scattered-site public housing, these homes had been vacant for over a decade.

MWCLT partnered with both organizations to bring some of the homes into the land trust, lowering their sales prices by \$30,000 to as low as \$135,000 for a high-quality, energy efficient, attractive home. This price is more attainable to low-income buyers, while the CLT model keeps them affordable in perpetuity.

PHOTO: MWCLT

FIGURE 03: MWCLT/nonprofit partnerships to deepen homeownership affordability

on a property-by-property basis when no requirements are triggered by statute or regulation.

OBJECTIVE 1.2

Subordinate priorities of the Land Bank will include retail/commercial/industrial activities, historic preservation, public spaces, and urban agriculture. These activities, with guidance from neighborhood conversations and collaborations, will help the Land Bank repurpose underused properties to meet a wide range of community needs.

STRATEGY 1.2.1

Retail, commercial, and industrial activities. The Land Bank may receive certain non-residential properties from the City which the CAP may elect to set aside for these uses. In such cases, the CAP will allow for additional public comment and engagement of the immediate community to determine best use options.

STRATEGY 1.2.2

Preservation or rehabilitation of historic properties. The Land Bank may also receive properties located in federal, state, and or local historic districts. The Land Bank will incorporate these additional regulations into the final disposition agreements for such eligible



Mural overlooking a parking lot in Jackson Ward (Paul Sableman via flickr)



The Low Line: a 5.5-acre green rehabilitation project running along the James River. (PHOTO: The Low Line / Capital Trees)



Community Garden Space managed by Tricycle Gardens (PHOTO: Maggie McCain via flickr)

properties, and take additional steps to ensure that the property recipient is familiar with the regulations applicable to rehabilitation and/or construction within those districts.

STRATEGY 1.2.3

Public spaces and places. Some properties received by the Land Bank may be designated for publicly-accessible open space, such as parks or playgrounds. The CAP will determine which properties are best suited for this use, and the Land Bank will transfer the property to an entity with demonstrated capabilities for development and maintenance. If no such entity is available, the CAP may elect to keep the property in the Land Bank until a suitable entity is identified or alternative strategy developed.

STRATEGY 1.2.4

Urban agriculture. Some properties received by the Land Bank may be located in communities where residents have determined that food access and food justice are prioritized needs. Furthermore, many properties may not be immediately developable based on size, zoning regulations, or market conditions. In such cases, the CAP may designate a property’s interim or final use for urban agriculture. The CAP may elect to transfer ownership of a property to an existing nonprofit or community organization for this purpose, or may enter into a long-term lease with an individual or organization.

OBJECTIVE 1.3

Community prioritization criteria will help focus the Land Bank's activities in areas in need of greatest intervention.

The Land Bank has the opportunity to seek tax delinquent properties in certain areas of the City in order to prioritize its work and generate more focused, positive impacts. These priorities will help the Land Bank directly address past and current inequalities. The Land Bank continues to adhere to the criteria established in the 2018-2019 Annual Plan, and has included additional areas of interest to expand our focus in 2020.

STRATEGY 1.3.1

Criteria for prioritization. The following criteria are used to evaluate neighborhoods and select communities for strategic land bank activity:

a. Current status of properties:

- 1. High number and percentage of vacant properties.** Vacant lots are an immediate opportunity for new, equitable development.

(Data from City of Richmond property assessments.)

- 2. High number and percentage of long-term tax delinquent properties.**² Via the direct sale method, this is the primary source of properties available to the land bank.

(Data from City of Richmond Finance Department.)

- 3. High number of code violations issued by City.**³ Unsafe structures should be specifically targeted for community-oriented revitalization to improve neighborhood health.

(Data from City of Richmond Code Enforcement Division.)

b. Affordability for low-income households:

- 1. Significant year-over-year increases in property values.** Large jumps in property values highlight areas where new investment has the potential to displace current residents.

(Data from City of Richmond property assessments.)

- 2. Significant increase in median rents since 2010.** Escalating rents can make once-affordable homes become a financial burden very quickly.

(Data from Census and American Community Survey.)

- 3. Significant increase in median home prices since 2010.** Surging for-sale home prices quickly lock many low and moderate-income people out of homeownership.

(Data from Central Virginia Regional Multiple Listing Service.)

² "Long-term" is defined as six (6) years or greater of local tax delinquency.

³ "Code violations" are defined as citations for unsafe structures or unfit structures.

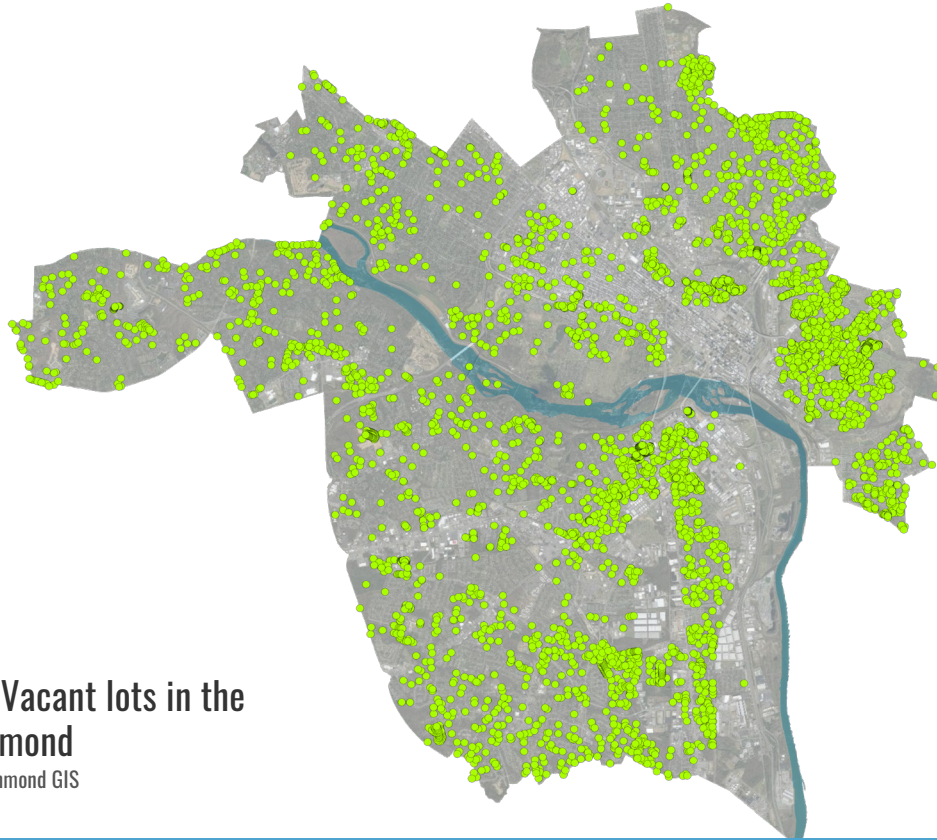


FIGURE 04: Vacant lots in the City of Richmond

SOURCE: City of Richmond GIS

There are more than **5,000** undeveloped residential lots and more than **1,200** vacant buildings in the City of Richmond.

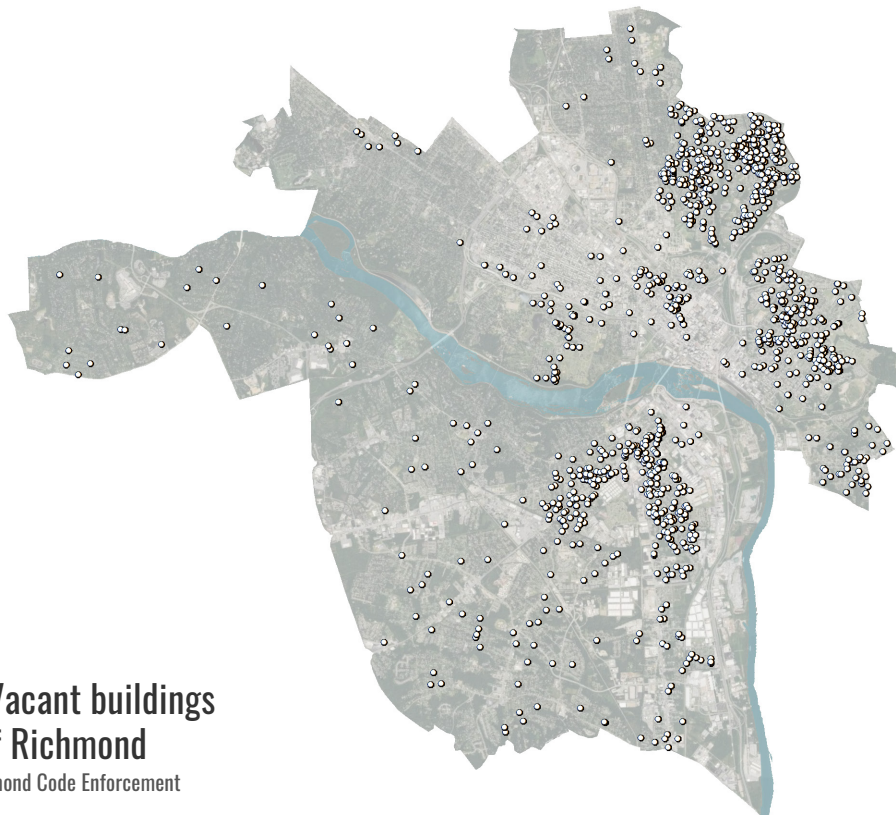


FIGURE 05: Vacant buildings in the City of Richmond

SOURCE: City of Richmond Code Enforcement

c. Community health:

1. **High ambient temperature relative to average.**⁴ Different land use and ground cover patterns create “urban heat islands” in Richmond. Because higher temperatures are associated with greater health risks, identifying “hot spots” across the City may help determine where vacant, undevelopable land in those areas can be prioritized for green interventions.
2. **Low food security.** Neighborhoods with limited access to fresh, healthy food can utilize vacant and empty lots for community gardens to promote food justice.
3. **Below-average life expectancy.** Community health is a major factor for individual health. Areas with poor health outcomes deserve focused, equitable interventions.

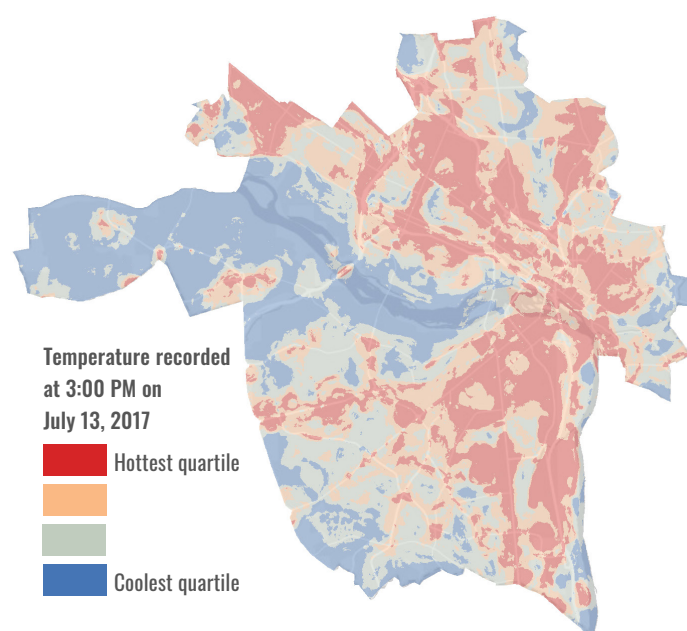


FIGURE 06: Urban heat islands in Richmond

SOURCE: J.S. Hoffman, Science Museum of Virginia, 2017

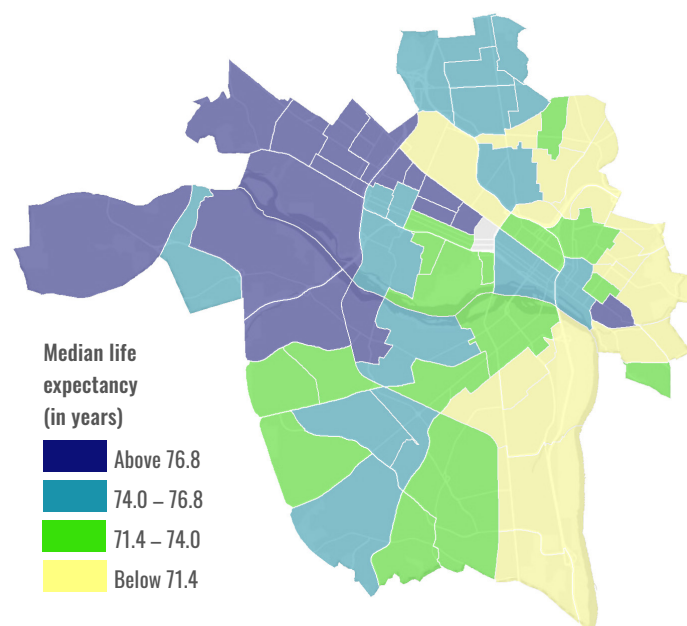


FIGURE 07: Median life expectancy by tract

SOURCE: Virginia Department of Health, 2015

⁴ In July 2017, a coalition of researchers with the Science Museum of Virginia conducted an urban heat island analysis for the City of Richmond using sensors on vehicles and bicycles. The resulting temperature gradient data is mapped to determine the sizes and locations of the City's hottest areas.

d. Additional criteria:

1. **Classification based on Market Value Analysis.** A Market Value Analysis (MVA) was completed for the Richmond region by The Reinvestment Fund in 2017, supported by the Richmond Memorial Health Foundation. The MVA classifies residential neighborhoods based on market conditions and housing opportunity. These classifications can be a visual tool for determining when public intervention can have the greatest impact. The Philadelphia Land Bank uses MVA to guide their strategic plan.⁵

2. **Gentrification potential and status.** Changes in home values, household incomes, and educational attainment within census tracts are a generally-accepted way to broadly determine which neighborhoods may experience gentrification—along with those which have already undergone the process.⁶ The Land Bank may strategically reserve land for equitable development and permanently affordable homes in these tracts to help keep long-term and modest-income residents in place.

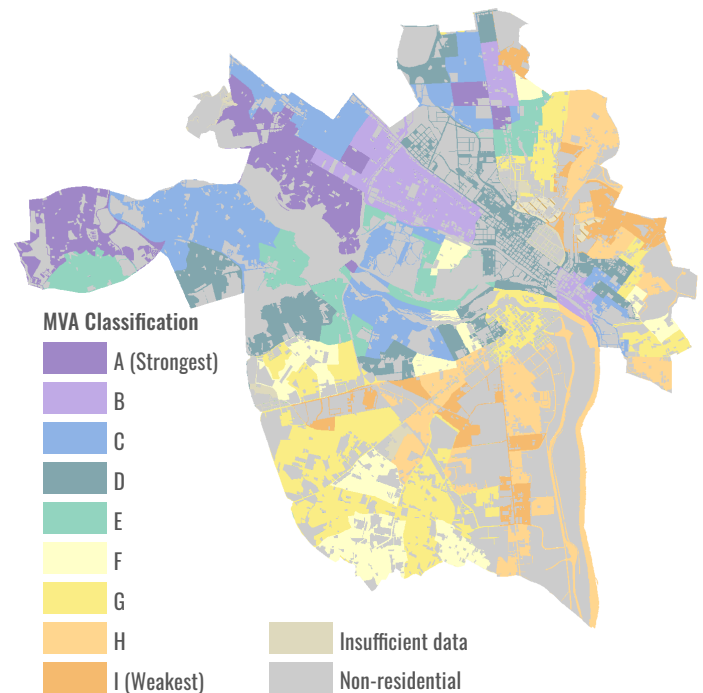


FIGURE 08: Market Value Analysis classifications

SOURCE: The Reinvestment Fund and Richmond Memorial Health Foundation, 2017

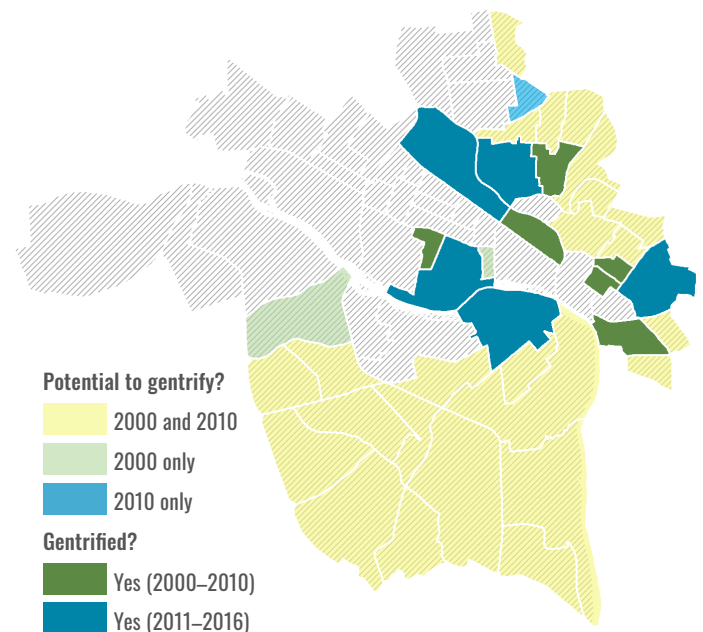


FIGURE 09: Gentrification by tract in Richmond, 2000–2016

SOURCES: Census 2000 and Census 2010 SF3 data; 2012–2016 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates

5 Philadelphia Land Bank. (2017, March 9) "2017 Strategic Plan & Performance Report."

6 For details and methodology, see: Governing Magazine. (2015, February) "Gentrification in America Report."

STRATEGY 1.3.2

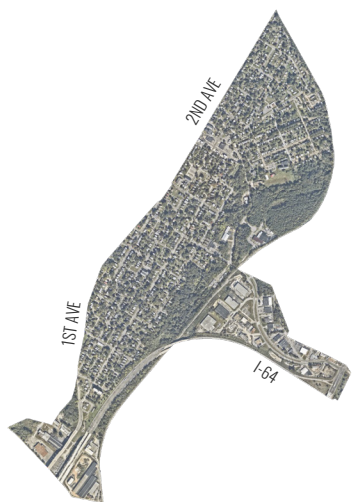
Prioritized communities. Although the Land Bank will operate city-wide, based on the above criteria, these are the communities where the Land Bank has concentrated its activities during its first years of operation, and will continue to do so for the coming year. Selected characteristics from City of Richmond and recent Census data are provided.

Highland Park



CENSUS TRACT 108

Population / households: ^a	4,354 / 1,582
Homeownership rate: ^a	43.7%
Poverty rate: ^a	32.7%
Median rent: ^a	\$1,069
Vacant properties: ^b	112 (6.7% of all parcels)
Tax delinquent properties: ^c	42 (2.5% of all parcels)
MVA classification(s): ^d	H
Median life expectancy: ^e	70 yrs (4 below City avg.)
Gentrified? ^f	Potential to gentrify



CENSUS TRACT 109

Population / households:	3,183 / 1,097
Homeownership rate:	42.2%
Poverty rate:	24.2%
Median rent:	\$932
Vacant properties:	91 (7.4% of all parcels)
Tax delinquent properties:	32 (2.6% of all parcels)
MVA classification(s):	H
Median life expectancy:	66 yrs (8 below City avg.)
Gentrified?	Potential to gentrify

(CENSUS TRACT MAPS ARE
NOT SHOWN TO SCALE)

Data sources:

a: 2014–2018 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates

b: City of Richmond GIS

c: City of Richmond Finance Department; only properties delinquent 6+ years

d: Market Value Analysis for the Richmond Region, The Reinvestment Fund

e: Virginia Department of Health

f: Analysis of Census and ACS data

Church Hill



CENSUS TRACT 203

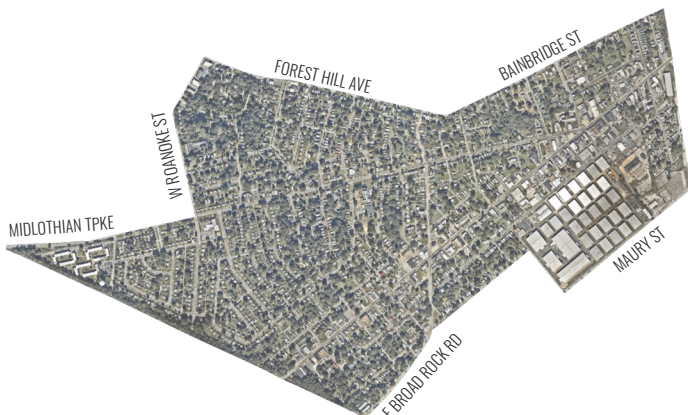
Population / households:	1,439 / 618
Homeownership rate:	60.2%
Poverty rate:	28.4%
Median rent:	\$1,167
Vacant properties:	174 (16% of all parcels)
Tax delinquent properties:	41 (3.8% of all parcels)
MVA classification(s):	G / H
Median life expectancy:	67 yrs (7 below City avg.)
Gentrified?	Potential to gentrify



CENSUS TRACT 207

Population / households:	1,177 / 659
Homeownership rate:	30.8%
Poverty rate:	21.4%
Median rent:	\$706
Vacant properties:	139 (16.3% of all parcels)
Tax delinquent properties:	20 (2.4% of all parcels)
MVA classification(s):	D
Median life expectancy:	67 yrs (7 below City avg.)
Gentrified?	Gentrified 2000–2010

Swansboro



CENSUS TRACT 604

Population / households:	6,267 / 1,945
Homeownership rate:	45.0%
Poverty rate:	40.7%
Median rent:	\$871
Vacant properties:	180 (8.5% of all parcels)
Tax delinquent properties:	67 (3.1% of all parcels)
MVA classification(s):	F / H / I
Median life expectancy:	69 yrs (5 below City avg.)
Gentrified?	Potential to gentrify

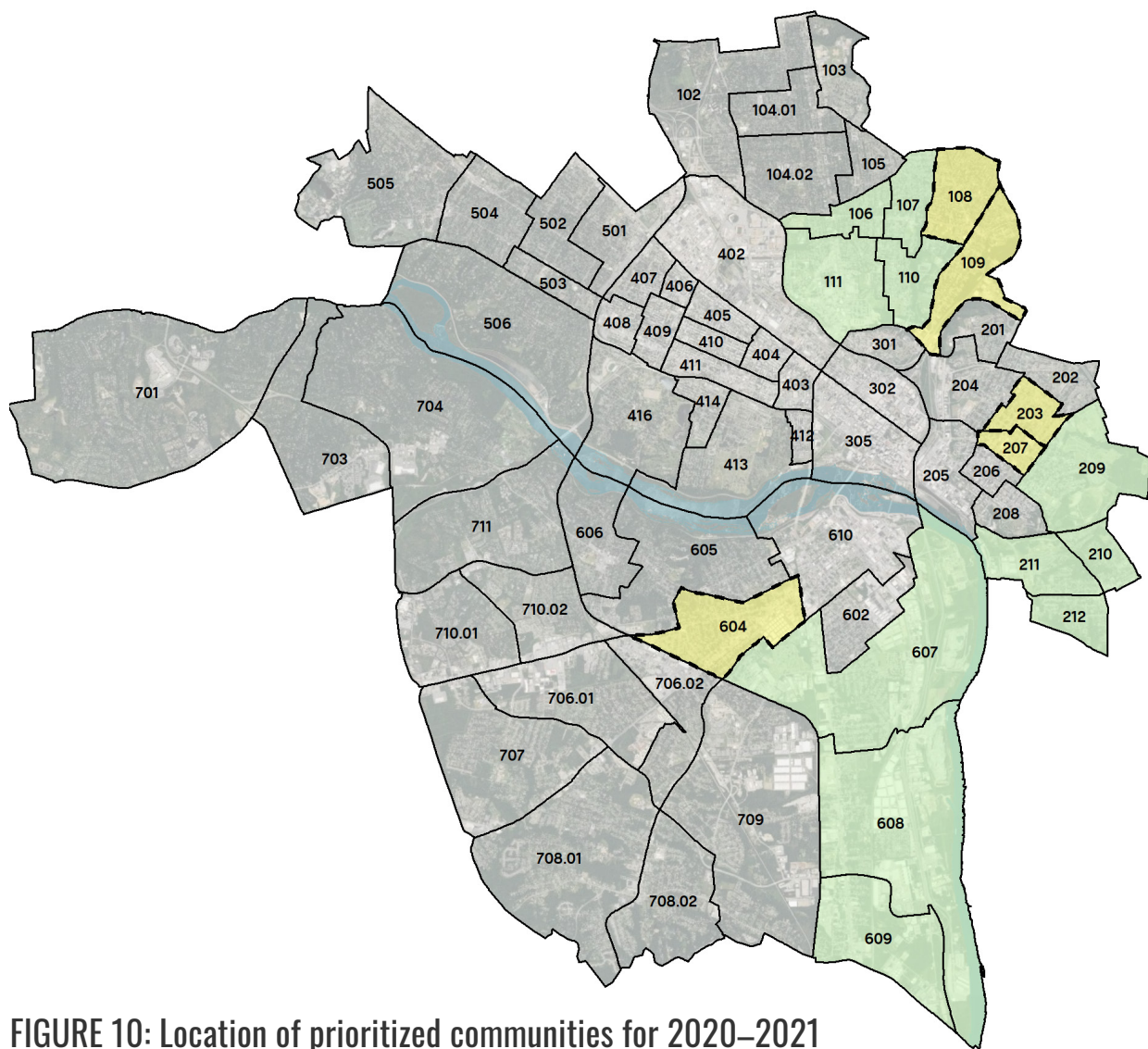
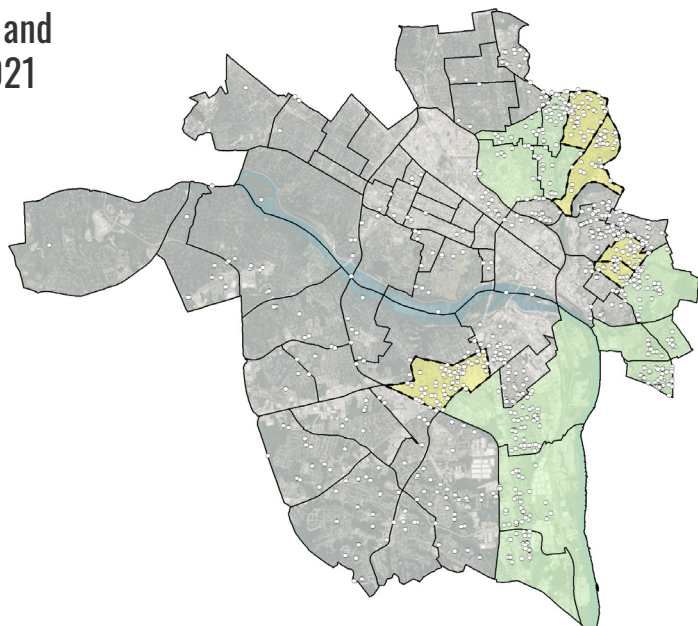


FIGURE 10: Location of prioritized communities for 2020–2021
 Number labels show census tract codes

FIGURE 11: Tax delinquent properties and prioritized communities for 2020–2021

SOURCE: City of Richmond GIS



STRATEGY 1.3.3

Terms and provisions of prioritization. The selection of these prioritized communities are subject to the following terms.

- a. The Land Bank will make best efforts to request and acquire properties in these communities. At least 60% of the properties that will be included in the Land Bank's requests to the City will be in these five tracts. The Land Bank will work in conjunction with the City for this process.
- b. The Land Bank will continue to obtain additional community and resident input within these neighborhoods throughout 2020-2021. For details, see **STRATEGY 3.2.3**.

STRATEGY 1.3.4

Additional focus areas. The five census tracts identified in **STRATEGY 1.3.2** are not the only neighborhoods with a high number of tax delinquent properties. Throughout 2019-2020, the Land Bank will engage residents and monitor tax delinquency, vacancy, and abandoned properties in the following communities to determine if they might be prioritized in the future:

- a. **Tract 209** (Oakwood):
44 long-term tax delinquent properties
- b. **Tract 602** (Blackwell):
22 long-term tax delinquent properties
- c. **Tract 607** (Bellemeade):
47 long-term tax delinquent properties
- d. **Tracts 608/609** (Jeff Davis Corridor):
61 long-term tax delinquent properties
- e. **Tracts 210/211/212** (Fulton):
59 long-term tax delinquent properties
- f. **Tract 106** (N. Barton Heights):
10 long-term tax delinquent properties
- g. **Tract 107** (Brookland Park):
32 long-term tax delinquent properties
- h. **Tracts 110/111** (Battery Park):
30 long-term tax delinquent properties

OBJECTIVE 1.4

Whenever applicable, the Land Bank's activities will align with existing planning efforts of the City. In this way, the Land Bank will be in harmony with broader neighborhood preservation and development goals now and in the future.

STRATEGY 1.4.1

Small area plans. If the Land Bank acquires

property in a neighborhood with a small area plan, the CAP will designate its final use in accordance with the goals and strategies outlined in such plans.

STRATEGY 1.4.2

Richmond 300. Land Bank staff have engaged with the Richmond 300 initiative to ensure that its mission and capabilities are incorporated into the City's new comprehensive plan. Land Bank staff have also engaged with Citywide efforts to improve Richmond's stock of affordable housing, through endeavors such as the Shared Equity and Economic Development (SEED) workgroup.

GOAL 2: *Streamlined procedure for acquiring, maintaining, and transferring properties.*

This goal sets the standards by which the Land Bank will obtain properties via several sources, effectively maintain properties it holds, and transfer properties once an end use and user have been determined.

OBJECTIVE 2.1

The Land Bank will have a simplified and efficient property acquisition process. The Land Bank will formalize avenues for acquiring properties, both from the City and other sources. Clear and robust mechanisms are necessary for the Land Bank to make meaningful impacts across Richmond.

STRATEGY 2.1.1

Continue strong working partnership with City. Throughout 2020 and 2021, the Land Bank will maintain and strengthen its relationship with the City regarding transfer of tax delinquent and City-owned properties.

- a. Collaborate with the City Attorney's Office, Code Enforcement Office, the City's Finance Department and other relevant City entities to lay out a consistent and standardized process for transferring tax delinquent

properties, with the goal of entering at least 60 new properties into the RLB pipeline in the upcoming year.

- b. Explore opportunities for transfer of City-owned surplus properties, pursuant to City of Richmond **ORD. NO. 2017-69**, concerning the sale of City-owned real estate. MWCLT will work with the City to identify surplus properties for land bank use, with the goal of entering at least 35 surplus properties into the RLB pipeline in the upcoming year.
- c. To avoid the potential displacement of low-income homeowners who may have challenges paying real estate taxes, the Land Bank will work with the City to continue support for the policy that exempts homeowners who reside in their homes from the tax foreclosure process.

STRATEGY 2.1.2

Explore other sources of property. The Land Bank will develop procedures for obtaining property via the following methods.

- a. **Strategic market acquisitions.** The Land Bank may elect to purchase certain properties offered for sale on the open market, in accordance with its strategic goals.
- b. **Land donations.** The Land Bank may receive donations of certain properties from individuals, nonprofit organizations, for-profit

corporations, and other entities. The Land Bank received its first property donation of a former Bank of America building in Spring 2020, and will participate in a community engagement process to create a vision for an end use for this property.

OBJECTIVE 2.2

Property maintenance will be efficient and fair. Before transferring parcels to end users, the Land Bank will undertake basic property maintenance activities to clean up litter and debris, cut grass and landscape, and remove any hazards, including building demolition when appropriate.



Formerly Greater Richmond ARC

Since beginning operations, the Land Bank has utilized SOAR365's landscaping and ground maintenance workforce development program for individuals with disabilities.

PHOTO: SOAR365

STRATEGY 2.2.1

Determine maintenance needs for each property. Prior to final property acquisition, Land Bank staff will evaluate the short and long-term maintenance needs of the lot or structure in a standardized report. This report will help the Land Bank find contractors ready and capable to complete the work.

STRATEGY 2.2.2

Partner with neighborhood organizations to identify locally-sourced labor. The Land Bank will expand its partnerships with community nonprofits and organizations to ensure that contracting opportunities are consistently made available to neighborhood members seeking work. The Land Bank will also create an online inquiry form for contractors to submit their letter of interest and qualifications.

STRATEGY 2.2.3

Prioritize small and community-based businesses. The Land Bank will make every effort to first hire qualified small businesses owned by minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and Richmond City residents. The Land Bank will collaborate with the City's Office of Community Wealth Building to encourage Minority Business Enterprise participation, as well as Section 3 participation when required by certain HUD funding programs.

OBJECTIVE 2.3

Property disposition procedures will be equitable and transparent. These policies outline how the Land Bank intends to create fair standards for the disposition of property to end users.

STRATEGY 2.3.1

Create fair and equitable eligibility guidelines for qualified purchasers. The Land Bank has created a two-part application process to ensure that the entities receiving properties are qualified and capable of the final use as determined by the CAP. After transferring properties solely to nonprofit entities during its first year of operations, the Richmond Land Bank will expand eligibility to individuals and for-profit developers. Applicants who demonstrate an understanding and commitment to projects that meet the Land Bank's goals will be prioritized. All applicants must demonstrate experience, financial capacity, and a robust plan to accomplish their proposals.

Additionally, the Land Bank remains committed to creating opportunities for entities and individuals who do not otherwise meet financial capacity thresholds to obtain Land Bank property for urban greening projects. This will be accomplished by working closely with applicants and connecting them with potential resources, such as peer mentorship or materials grants.

STRATEGY 2.3.2

Develop and utilize robust development agreements. Properties transferred from the Land Bank to end users will have development agreements in accordance with specific requirements determined by the CAP. Development agreements will include a reversionary clause that will allow the Land Bank to reclaim the property if the conditions of the development agreement are not met.

STRATEGY 2.3.3

Use of development proceeds. The Land Bank will receive reimbursement for properties it transfers. These payments will be used according to the following stipulations:

a. Initial policies for use of proceeds.

During its first years of operation, the Land Bank's primary source of property has been through the City's direct sale mechanism. Tax delinquent properties transferred via this method were acquired for approximately \$2,000 to \$3,000 each, depending on closing costs and attorney fees.

The Land Bank will continue to transfer properties to nonprofit and community organizations at this cost, plus a minor administrative fee. Proceeds from this fee will help cover staff time and any maintenance and carrying costs needed on properties.

b. Sale of property at market value. During 2020-2021, the Land Bank will transfer to for-profit entities and developers at the properties' assessed values. Proceeds from this fee will help cover operational expenses, as well as the continued development of new outreach strategies and initiatives.

GOAL 3: *Transparent process with sustained community involvement.*

For the Land Bank to operate with the full confidence of residents, it must proactively engage with the community regarding its goals and operations.

OBJECTIVE 3.1

The Citizens' Advisory Panel (CAP) will be the primary entity responsible for decisions on property use and disposition.

The CAP serves as the intermediary between the public and the Land Bank.

STRATEGY 3.1.1

Purpose. The CAP is established by the 2017 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the City of Richmond and MWCLT to provide a permanent opportunity for the public to provide input on the Land Bank's activities.

STRATEGY 3.1.2

Responsibilities. The CAP will be responsible for deciding the disposition of Land Bank properties, based on criteria established by the Annual Plan. The CAP will review recommendations by Land Bank staff, evaluate qualifications for organizations and/or individuals who may receive properties, and make decisions regarding the end use of Land Bank properties. The CAP will recommend which properties will be designated for permanently affordable housing and other land uses covered by the

MOA and the Annual Plan.

STRATEGY 3.1.3

Membership. In accordance with the MOA, members of the CAP are appointed in the following manner:

- One member appointed by the Chief Administrative Officer, who shall serve as chair;
- Two members appointed by Richmond City Council;
- Two members appointed by the Mayor of the City of Richmond;
- Four members appointed by the MWCLT Board of Directors;

As of June 2020, eight of the nine CAP members have been appointed. Three of these members were elected through a public application process developed in conjunction with Land Bank staff and initially appointed CAP members. Members will serve staggered terms of 3 years.

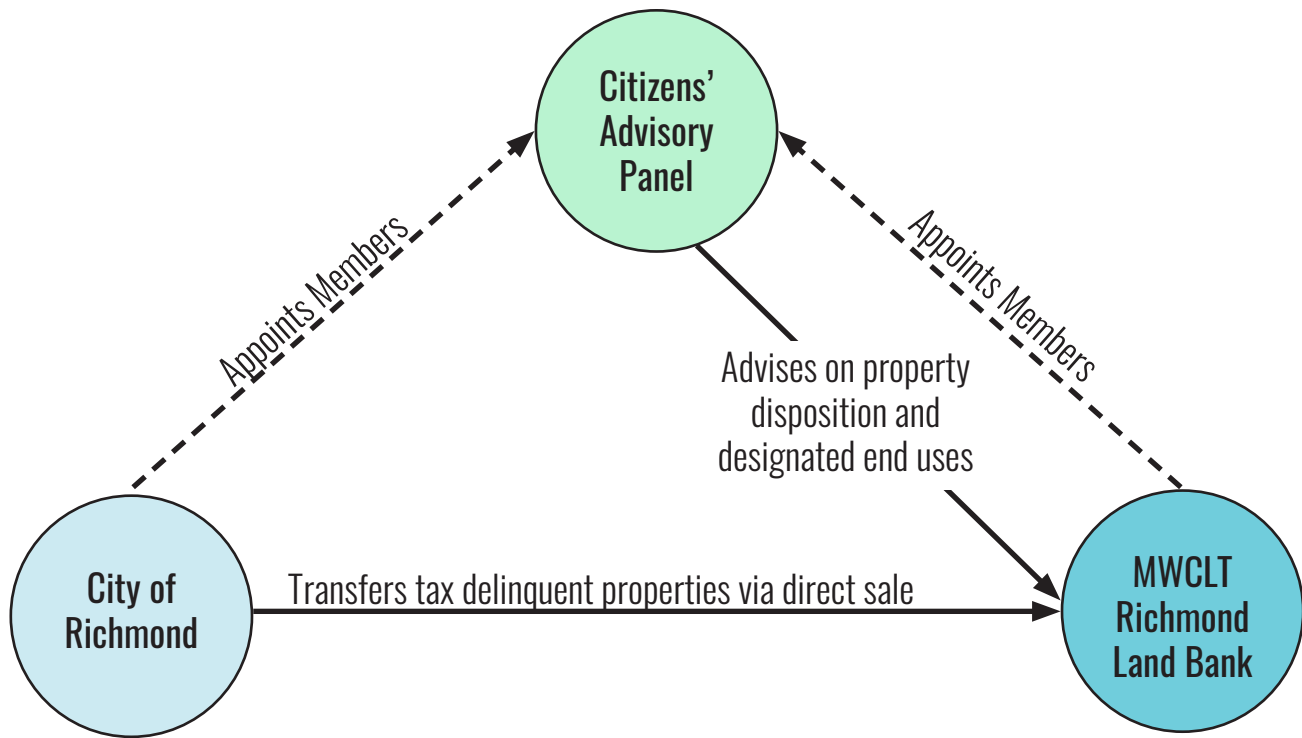


FIGURE 12: Relationship between the City, CAP, and Land Bank

STRATEGY 3.1.4

By-laws and procedures. . Current CAP members have created and adopted their own by-laws and procedures. These include but are not limited to membership requirements and expectations, voting procedures, and term schedules.

STRATEGY 3.1.5

Meeting plans. In general, CAP meetings are open to the public. The CAP will meet at least once per quarter in communities where Land Bank properties are prevalent. Citizens

will be provided opportunity for comment. Meeting times, locations, and agendas will be available on the Land Bank website in advance. Minutes from these meetings will also be made publicly available. Per COVID-19 safety considerations, CAP meetings have been moved to online format. Agendas and materials will be provided on our website in advance, along with an online solicitation for public comment. Public comments are then discussed with CAP members during the meetings.

STRATEGY 3.1.6

Guidance. The CAP will base its decisions for property uses on the Land Bank annual plan, community engagement (especially for prioritized neighborhoods), the Richmond 300 master plan update, any other applicable small area plans, and staff reports.

STRATEGY 3.1.7

Conflict of interest. According to the MOA, no members of the CAP may directly or indirectly receive Land Bank properties or be employed by entities that receive property from the Land Bank.

OBJECTIVE 3.2

Opportunities for additional community input will be made available consistently and often. Along with ongoing chances for the CAP to receive public input on property disposition, the Land Bank will provide community members with opportunities to guide broader planning processes and priorities.

STRATEGY 3.2.1

Hold open meetings of the MWCLT Board of Directors and the CAP. Beginning in 2020 and at least once annually thereafter, the MWCLT Board of Directors and CAP will hold a joint

meeting open to the public. The purpose of this meeting will be to review Land Bank activities and plan future strategies. The first of such meetings occurred in May of 2020.

STRATEGY 3.2.2

Expand opportunities for Annual Plan input. MWCLT will develop strategies to ensure community members have opportunities to provide comments on the Annual Plan via in-person neighborhood meetings, one-on-one meetings with interested parties, and online surveys and input forms.

STRATEGY 3.2.3

Create and implement a separate Community Engagement Plan. Land Bank staff along with CAP members will develop a COVID-19 Community Engagement Plan that will inform how MWCLT will gather input from the public, especially residents of prioritized communities, during the pandemic on Land Bank goals and activities. This plan will be completed during the summer of 2020. Land Bank Staff will also strategize with CAP members on what community engagement can be implemented once the COVID-19 pandemic ends.

OBJECTIVE 3.3

The Land Bank will develop ways to measure its progress and track achievement of goals. These criteria remain largely unchanged from the 2019-2020 Annual Plan and include, but are not limited to, the following:

STRATEGY 3.3.1

Operational benchmarks:

1. Number of properties acquired.
2. Number of properties cleaned up and maintained.
3. Number of properties transferred out of the Land Bank.
4. Number of projects completed within timeframe of development agreements.
5. Number of properties held strategically in the Land Bank for interim uses.

STRATEGY 3.3.2

Individual/household benchmarks:

1. Number of affordable homes sold or rented.
2. Household incomes of buyers and renters.
3. Demographics of buyers and renters.
4. Affordability of homes.
5. Total long-term equity accrued by homeowners.

6. Number of jobs for neighborhood members created during repurposing of properties.
7. Number of individuals able to lease/buy nonresidential lots through the Land Bank program

STRATEGY 3.3.3

Neighborhood benchmarks:

1. Designated uses of transferred properties and alignment with priorities.
2. Total number and area of green spaces created or preserved.
3. Total number and area of gardens created.
4. Total number of parcels returning to active commercial use.
5. Total short-term and long-term economic impact of repurposed properties.
6. Increase in property values, both of transferred and adjacent properties.
7. Number of historic structures and assets preserved.
8. Number of meetings and focus groups within broader engagement efforts for properties without a clear use.

As the Land Bank continues the disposition of property in the coming year, it will continue to

provide public information to track and evaluate its progress by these benchmarks.

OBJECTIVE 3.4

Providing data on specific properties, including those currently and formerly owned by the Land Bank, will increase transparency and promote trust in the organization. The Land Bank website is updated on a regular basis to reflect properties open for application, as well as those which have already been transferred, and those which are being strategically held while more in-depth engagement is being conducted.

STRATEGY 3.4.1

Maintain an inventory of all available and transferred properties. The Land Bank's website serves as a publicly-accessible property database that allows each property record to be posted on the web in a searchable, browsable format. These records will also include properties that have been transferred; for such records, the final recipient and final designated use will be shown.

The Land Bank will continue building out its web presence, with the parallel goal of expanding its social media presence in order to inform a broader audience of its holdings.

STRATEGY 3.4.2

Other resources to be made publicly available. Along with property information, the Land Bank will make the following resources available online:

- a. Instructions and requirements for becoming a qualified organization or individual to seek property from the Land Bank, along with application materials.
- b. Allocation of property maintenance contracts awarded to community-based businesses.



Richmond from Church Hill Overlook (Julia MacNelly)



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