

# The Richmond Land Bank Annual Plan July 2019 – June 2020



*A core mission of The Maggie Walker Community Land Trust*



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 IMAGES

TOP: “Shed Town” rowhouses on the 900 block of N 33rd St (Ronnie Pitman via flickr)  
MIDDLE: Richmond & Rappahannock River Railway Terminal, 1001 N 29th St (Ronnie Pitman via flickr)  
BOTTOM: Rowhouses on the 2100 block of Bainbridge St (Taber Andrew Bain via flickr)

# Acknowledgements

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

## **THE MWCLT BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Laura Lafayette (Chair)  
Carolyn Champion (Vice-Chair)  
Schirra Hayes (Treasurer)  
Nelson Reveley (Secretary)  
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Helen Hardiman  
Schirra Hayes  
Laura Lafayette  
Nelson Reveley  
Albert Walker

*These are the seven appointees as of July 2019; two additional City Council nominees are pending.*

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# Contents

**6** INTRODUCTION

**10** LAND BANK PLAN FOR 2019–2020

11 GOAL 1

*Strategic property transformation*

24 GOAL 2

*Streamlined acquisition and disposition*

28 GOAL 3

*Transparent processes*

# INTRODUCTION

The Maggie Walker Community Land Trust is pleased to provide the following updates to our Annual Plan for 2019–2020. The Land Bank received its first property transfers from the City during the current year, but will not transfer parcels to end users until later in 2019.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2018-2019 YEAR:

### THE LAND BANK BEGAN OPERATIONS.

The Land Bank became operational with the transfer of 18 tax delinquent properties from the City. These properties are in the East End, Barton Heights, North Jackson Ward, and Swansboro. A listing and map of these properties is contained in this update. The Land Bank has expressed its goal to receive and repurpose 50-100 vacant, blighted tax delinquent properties per year over the next three years. This scale of activity is critical in order to achieve the objective of positive neighborhood impact.

### 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 500 over the past twelve months, to fewer than 1,500.

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.

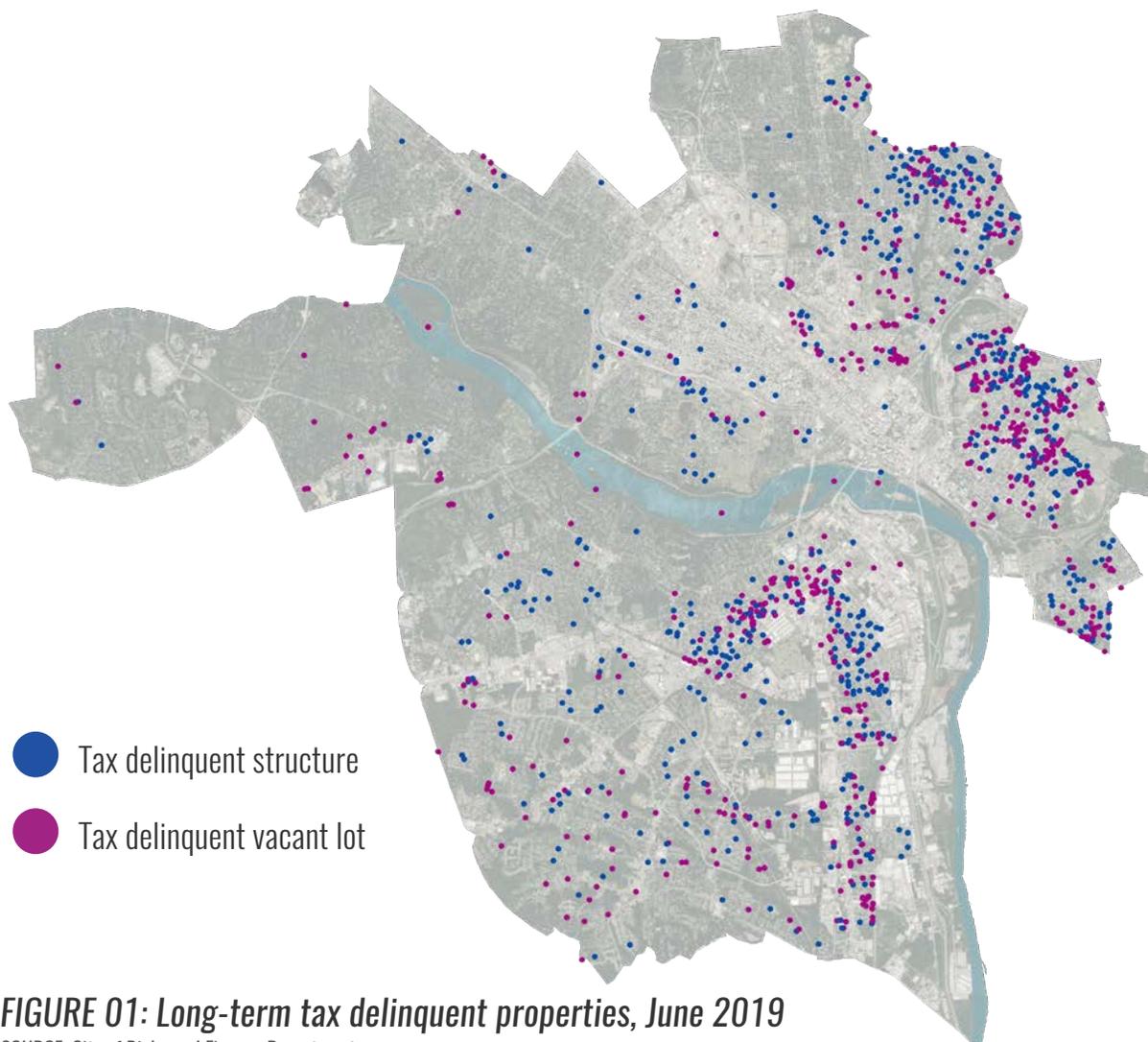
### NEW, FAVORABLE STATE POLICY.

One positive change is that Delegate Betsy Carr sponsored legislation that expanded the number of properties that the city may “direct sell” to the Land Bank by raising the applicable caps from \$50,000/\$100,000 to \$75,000/\$150,000. This will result in more properties that have serious tax delinquency being available for transfer to the Land Bank. This legislation passed the House and Senate

with strong bipartisan majorities, was signed by the Governor, and will take effect July 1, 2019.

### CITIZENS’ ADVISORY PANEL STARTS UP.

The Citizens’ Advisory Panel (CAP) held its first organizational meetings in 2018-2019. Seven of the nine members of the panel have been appointed, with the final two appointments by Richmond City Council expected in the next several months. The CAP will hold its last organizational meeting in August and its first operational meeting to discuss the use and disposition of land bank properties this fall. increased direct sale activity.



**FIGURE 01: Long-term tax delinquent properties, June 2019**

SOURCE: City of Richmond Finance Department

# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2019-2020 ANNUAL PLAN UPDATE:

## LIMITED SCOPE OF CHANGES.

As noted above, the Land Bank did not dispose of any properties during the past year, and the flow of properties to the bank from the City is just beginning to gain momentum. Accordingly, we have made very few significant changes to the current plan.

## 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.

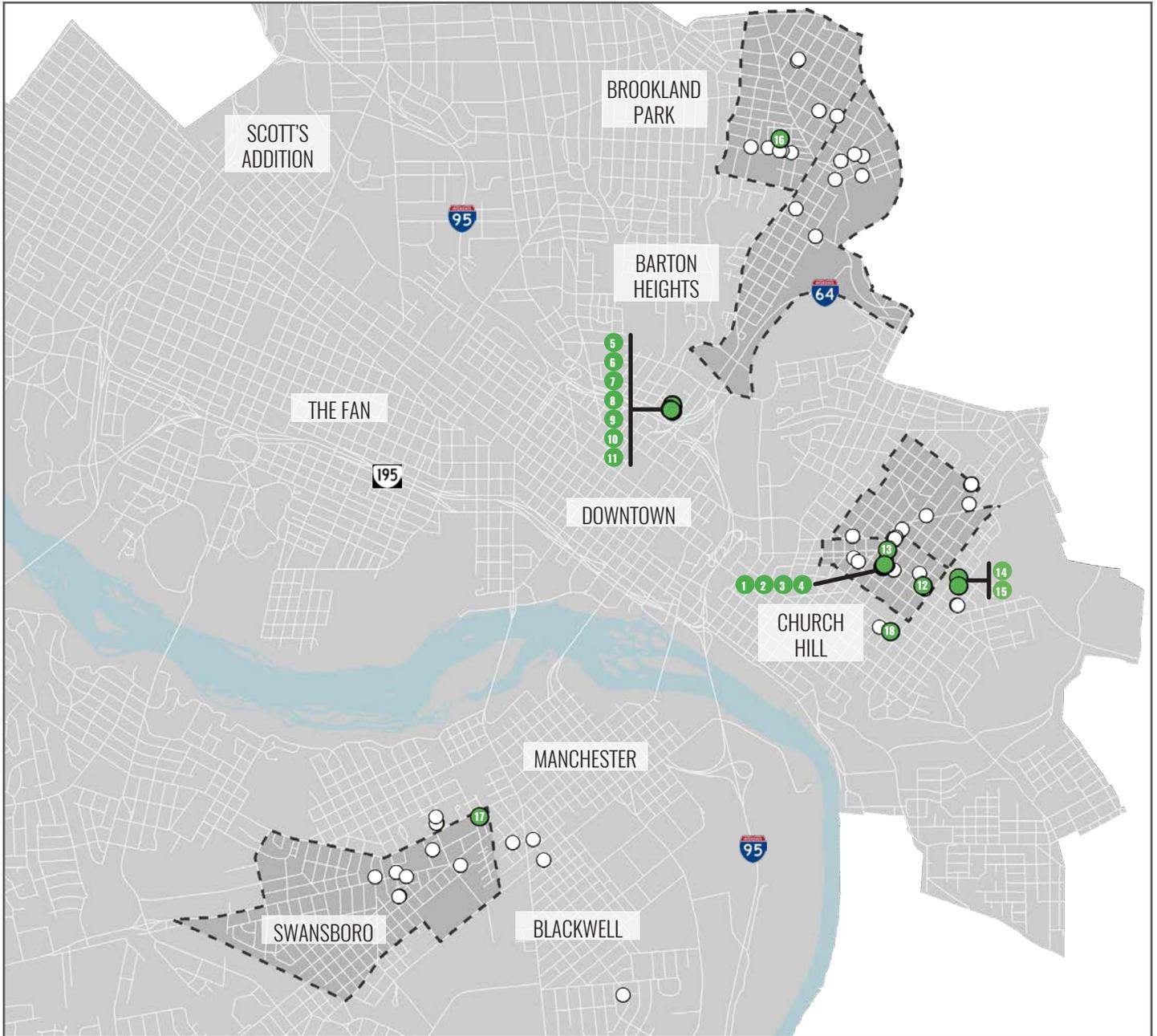
## SAME PRIORITY NEIGHBORHOODS.

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 UNCHANGED.

The plan retains the provision that during the next year, only qualified not-for-profit organizations will be eligible to receive properties from the Land Bank. The CAP will determine these eligibility criteria. Following 2019-2020, the Land Bank will consider expanding the eligibility criteria to include other types of entities.

**FIGURE 02: Properties held and requested by the Richmond Land Bank, June 2019**



- 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 Preston St  
Vacant lot
- 6** 304 Preston St  
Single-family home

- 7** 306 Preston St  
Single-family home
- 8** 307 Preston St  
Single-family home
- 9** 307 1/2 Preston St  
Vacant lot
- 10** 309 Preston St  
Vacant lot
- 11** 311 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

**○ Additional Tax Delinquent Properties (57)**  
Requested from the City of Richmond by MWCLT; have not yet been confirmed for transfer to the Land Bank

**LAND BANK PRIORITY NEIGHBORHOODS**

# LAND BANK PLAN FOR 2019–2020

## **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.

### 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 a certain portion of properties in the community land trust shared-equity model, as determined by the Citizens’ Advisory Panel (CAP).<sup>1</sup>

MWCLT will develop new or rehabilitated homes on these properties made available to households earning no more than 115% of the current Area Median Income (AMI) for the Richmond, VA MSA<sup>2</sup> (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 would also enter into the land trust model for permanent affordability. (See example in **FIGURE 15** on following pages.)

<sup>1</sup> The Citizens’ Advisory Panel is discussed in detail on page 40.

<sup>2</sup> 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 . . .*

*. . . the Land Bank can:*

## Below 50% AMI

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

<b>\$30,250</b>	<b>\$34,600</b>	<b>\$43,200</b>
1-person household	2-person household	4-person household

- Acquire and assemble parcels for affordable multifamily rental development.
- Solicit proposals for development of deeply-subsized 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.

## 50% to 80% AMI

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

<b>\$48,400</b>	<b>\$55,300</b>	<b>\$69,100</b>
1-person household	2-person household	4-person household

- 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 CLT model to provide perpetual affordability.

## 80% to 115% AMI

*115% area median income for the Richmond, VA MSA:*

<b>\$69,550</b>	<b>\$79,500</b>	<b>\$99,350</b>
1-person household	2-person household	4-person household

- 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 CLT model to provide perpetual affordability.

*(AMI limits provided for FY2019)*

## 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 may, but are not required 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 on a property-by-property basis when no requirements are triggered by statute or regulation.



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: Richmond Metropolitan Habitat for Humanity

**FIGURE 03: MWCLT/nonprofit partnerships to deepen homeownership affordability**

## 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 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.



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



Aerial view of the newly renovated Kanawha Plaza in Downtown (Bill Dickinson via flickr)



Compost bins at a community garden in Manchester (University of Richmond Living-Learning Programs via flickr)

### 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 established these criteria in the 2018-2019 Annual Plan and expects to evaluate and consider possible modifications 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.**<sup>3</sup> 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.**<sup>4</sup> 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.)

<sup>3</sup> "Long-term" is defined as six (6) years or greater of local tax delinquency.

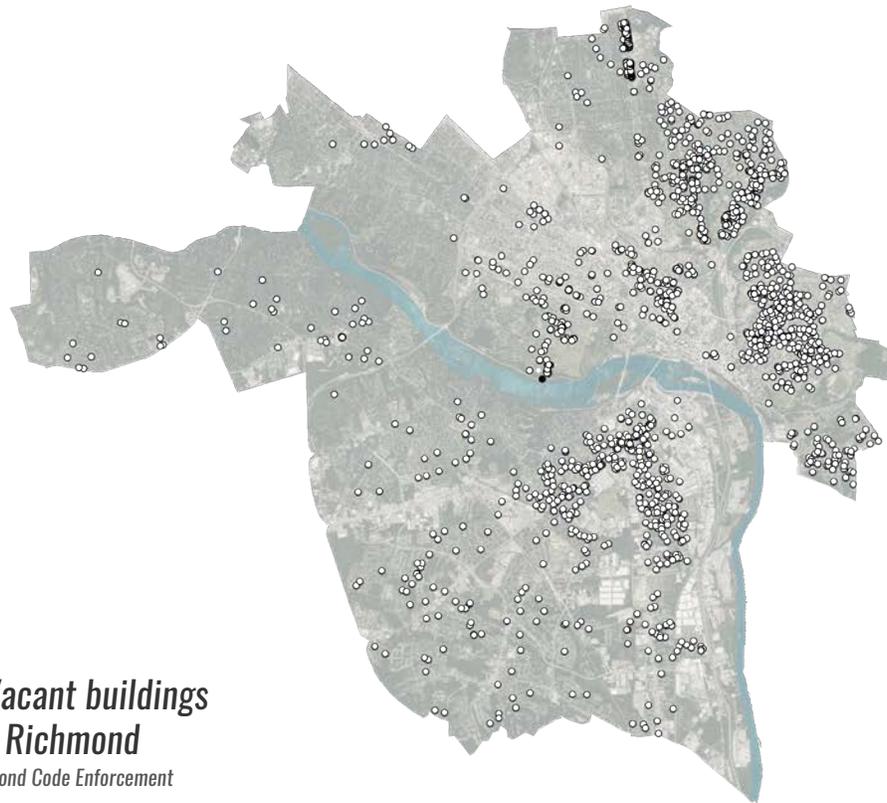
<sup>4</sup> "Code violations" are defined as citations for unsafe structures or unfit structures.



**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 **3,100** vacant buildings in the City of Richmond.

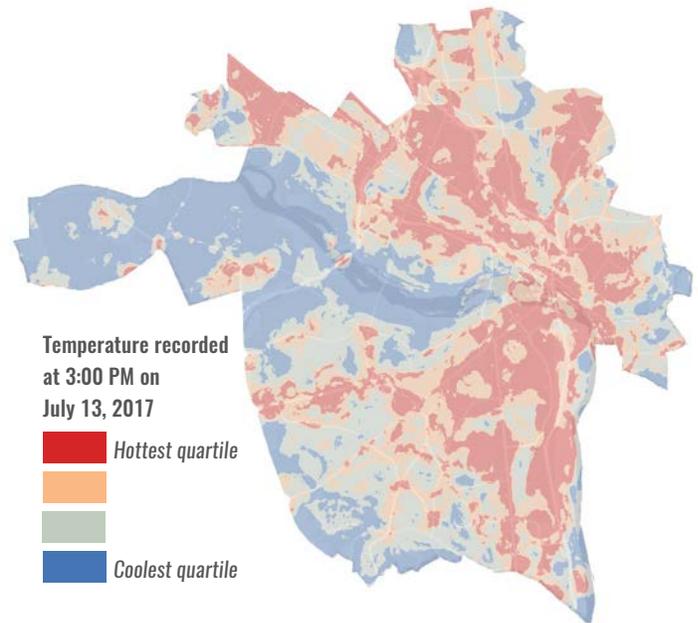


**FIGURE 05: Vacant buildings in the City of Richmond**

SOURCE: City of Richmond Code Enforcement

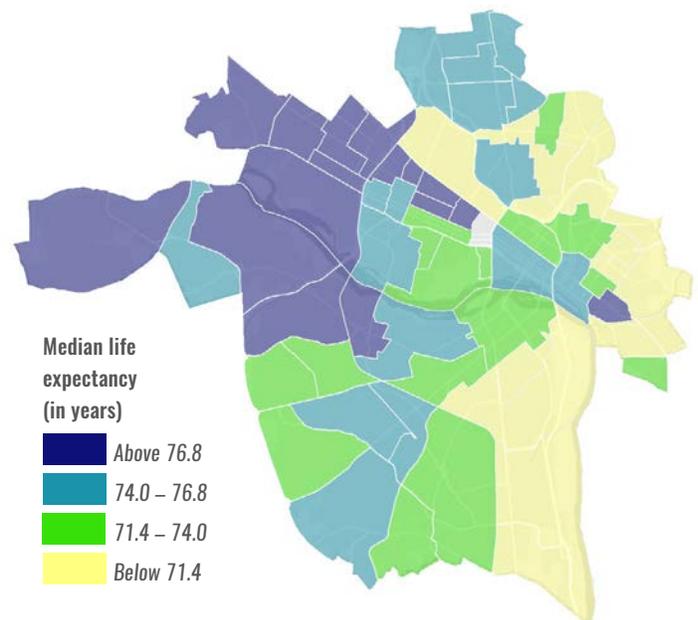
### c. Community health:

- 1. High ambient temperature relative to average.**<sup>5</sup> 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**

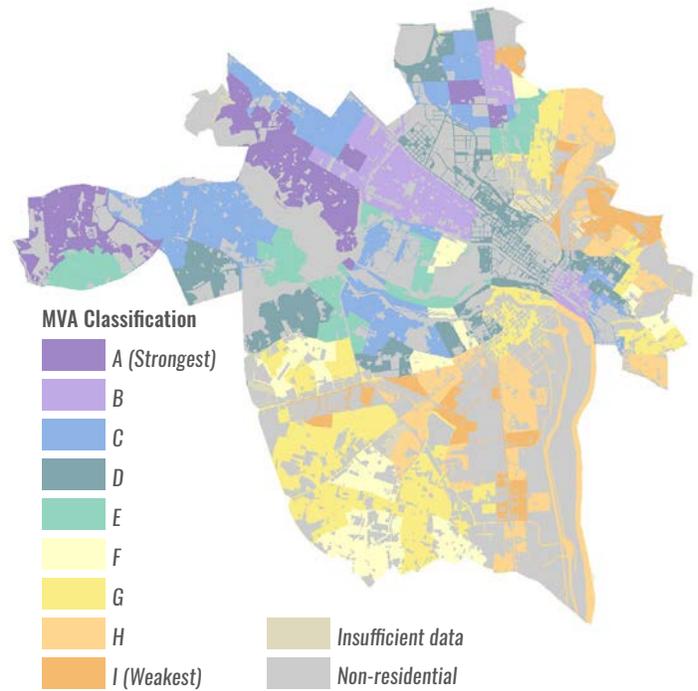
SOURCE: Virginia Department of Health, 2015

<sup>5</sup> 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.

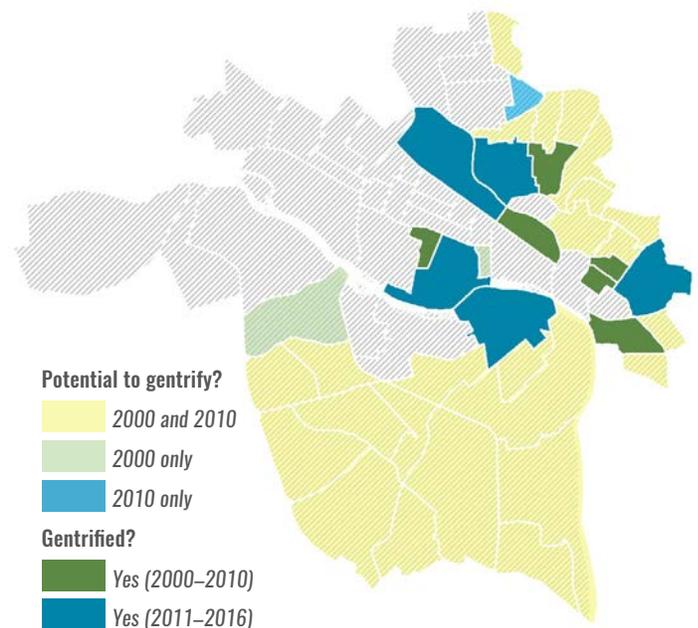
d. Additional criteria:

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.<sup>6</sup>

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.<sup>7</sup> 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

6 Philadelphia Land Bank. (2017, March 9) “2017 Strategic Plan & Performance Report.”

7 For details and methodology, see: Governing Magazine. (2015, February) “Gentrification in America Report.”

## STRATEGY 1.3.2

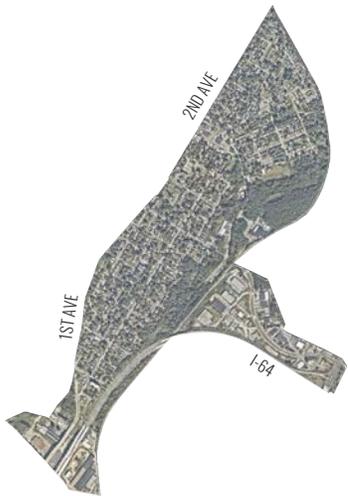
**Prioritized communities.** Although the Land Bank will operate city-wide, based on the above criteria, these are the communities where the Land Bank will concentrate its activities during 2019–2020. Because the Land Bank has yet to transfer properties as of June 2019, these tracts remain unchanged from the 2018-2019 Annual Plan. Selected characteristics from City of Richmond and recent Census data are provided.

# Highland Park



### CENSUS TRACT 108

Population / households: <sup>a</sup>	<b>4,078 / 1,532</b>
Homeownership rate: <sup>a</sup>	<b>51.4%</b>
Poverty rate: <sup>a</sup>	<b>31.0%</b>
Median rent: <sup>a</sup>	<b>\$1,028</b> (+59% since 2009)
Vacant properties: <sup>b</sup>	<b>97</b> (6.0% of all parcels)
Tax delinquent properties: <sup>c</sup>	<b>70</b> (4.3% of all parcels)
MVA classification(s): <sup>d</sup>	<b>H</b>
Median life expectancy: <sup>e</sup>	<b>70 yrs</b> (4 below City avg.)
Gentrified? <sup>f</sup>	<b>Potential to gentrify</b>



### CENSUS TRACT 109

Population / households:	<b>3,236 / 1,087</b>
Homeownership rate:	<b>39.5%</b>
Poverty rate:	<b>26.5%</b>
Median rent:	<b>\$967</b> (+7% since 2009)
Vacant properties:	<b>118</b> (9.7% of all parcels)
Tax delinquent properties:	<b>44</b> (3.6% of all parcels)
MVA classification(s):	<b>H</b>
Median life expectancy:	<b>66 yrs</b> (8 below City avg.)
Gentrified?	<b>Potential to gentrify</b>

**(CENSUS TRACT MAPS ARE NOT SHOWN TO SCALE)**

Data sources:

- a: 2013–2017 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates
- b: City of Richmond property assessments
- 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

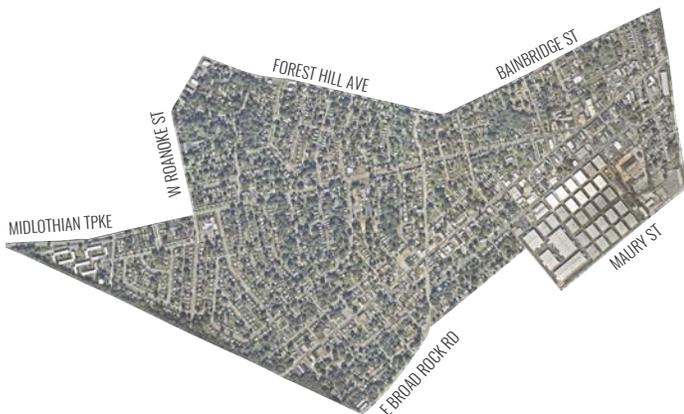
Population / households:	<b>1,548 / 632</b>
Homeownership rate:	<b>61.9%</b>
Poverty rate:	<b>33.1%</b>
Median rent:	<b>\$1111</b> (+28% since 2009)
Vacant properties:	<b>225</b> (20.5% of all parcels)
Tax delinquent properties:	<b>63</b> (5.7% of all parcels)
MVA classification(s):	<b>G / H</b>
Median life expectancy:	<b>67 yrs</b> (7 below City avg.)
Gentrified?	<b>Potential to gentrify</b>



## CENSUS TRACT 207

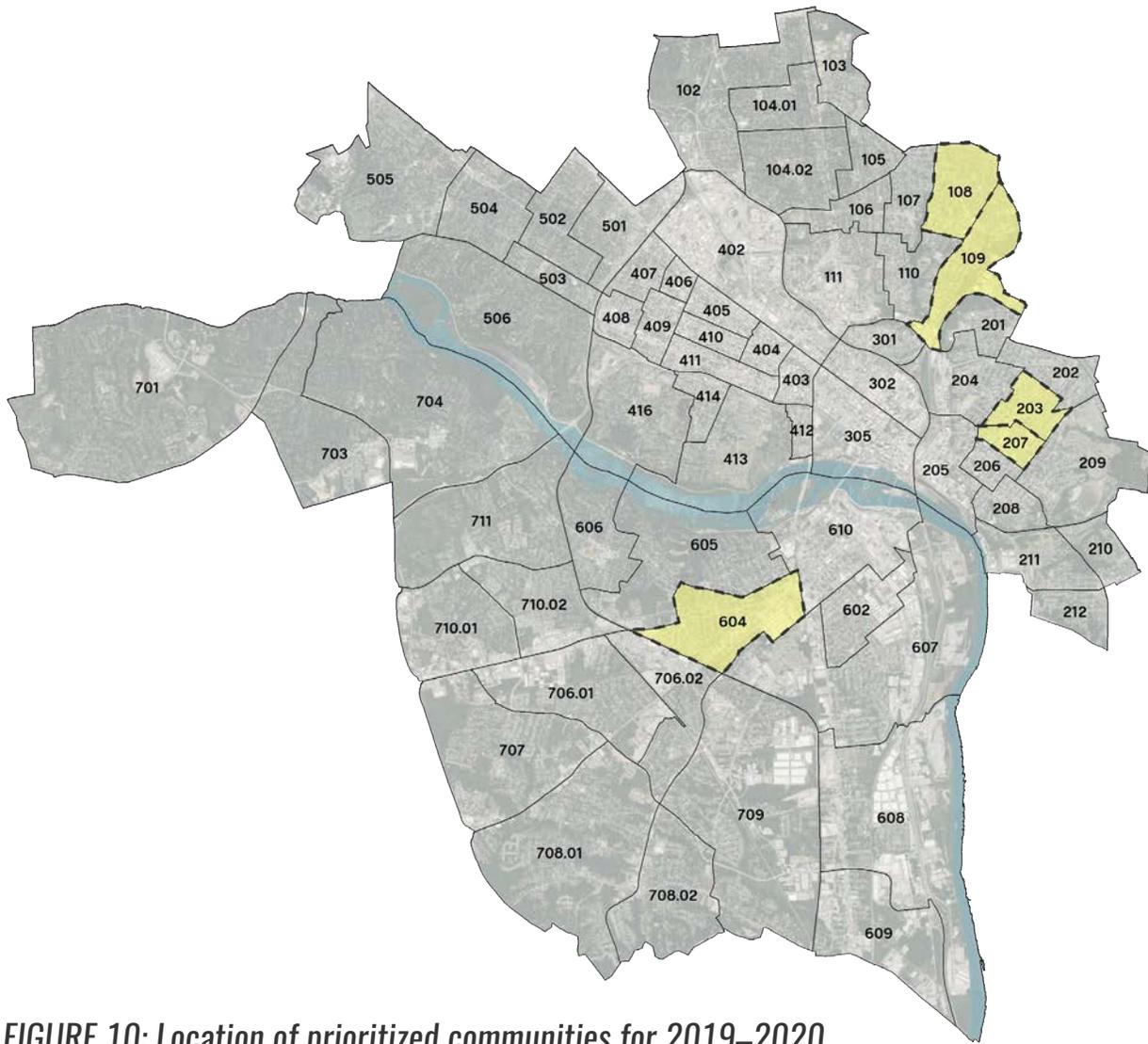
Population / households:	<b>1,346 / 626</b>
Homeownership rate:	<b>27.3%</b>
Poverty rate:	<b>39.1%</b>
Median rent:	<b>\$654</b> (+29% since 2009)
Vacant properties:	<b>193</b> (22.8% of all parcels)
Tax delinquent properties:	<b>45</b> (5.3% of all parcels)
MVA classification(s):	<b>D</b>
Median life expectancy:	<b>67 yrs</b> (7 below City avg.)
Gentrified?	<b>Gentrified 2000–2010</b>

# Swansboro



## CENSUS TRACT 604

Population / households:	<b>5,595 / 1,988</b>
Homeownership rate:	<b>43.2%</b>
Poverty rate:	<b>36.5%</b>
Median rent:	<b>\$887</b> (+12% since 2009)
Vacant properties:	<b>225</b> (10.6% of all parcels)
Tax delinquent properties:	<b>108</b> (5.1% of all parcels)
MVA classification(s):	<b>F / H / I</b>
Median life expectancy:	<b>69 yrs</b> (5 below City avg.)
Gentrified?	<b>Potential to gentrify</b>

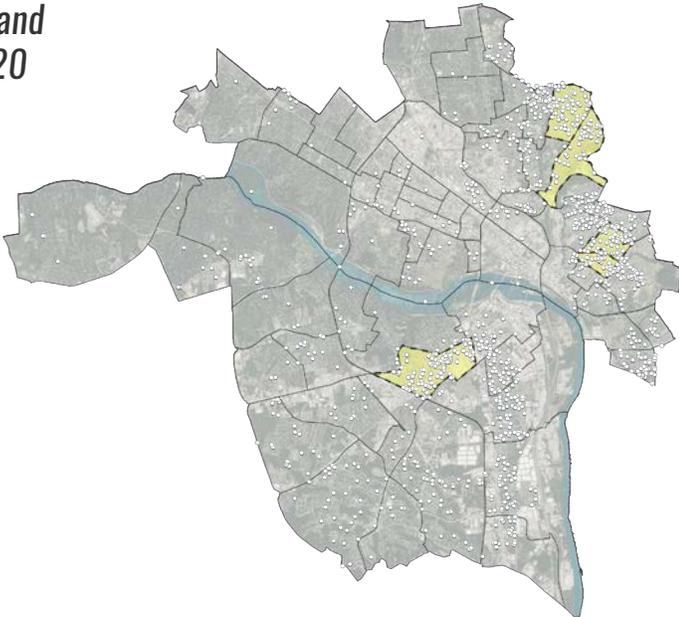


**FIGURE 10: Location of prioritized communities for 2019–2020**

Number labels show census tract codes

**FIGURE 11: Tax delinquent properties and prioritized communities for 2019–2020**

SOURCE: City of Richmond Finance Department



### 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.

**Of the 75 vacant, tax delinquent properties requested by the Land Bank as of June 2019, 55 (73%) are in prioritized communities.**

b. The Land Bank will continue to obtain additional community and resident input within these neighborhoods throughout 2019–2020. 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):  
70 long-term tax delinquent properties
- b. **Tract 602** (Blackwell):  
43 long-term tax delinquent properties
- c. **Tract 607** (Bellemeade):  
71 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.** In the past year, Land Bank staff have engaged with the Richmond 300 master plan update initiative. As that process begins to draft and finalize goals and strategies throughout 2019 and 2020, the Land Bank will continue to ensure that its mission and capabilities are incorporated into the City's new comprehensive plan.

## **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 2019 and 2020, 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 Officer, the City's Finance Department and other relevant City entities to lay out a consistent and standardized process for transferring tax delinquent properties. The Land Bank and City will work together to create annual goals for the number of properties transferred.

- 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 determine how this ordinance may affect the Land Bank's ability to receive surplus properties.
- 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 elect to receive donations of certain properties from individuals, nonprofit organizations, for-profit corporations, and other entities.

## 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.

### 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.



*Formerly Greater Richmond ARC*

As an interim strategy for 2018-2019, the Land Bank has utilized SOAR365's landscaping and ground maintenance workforce development program for individuals with disabilities.

PHOTO: SOAR365

## 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 must ensure that the entities receiving properties are qualified and capable of the final use as determined by the CAP.

By September 2019, MWCLT will work with the CAP to finalize its disposition policy and application process. This policy will be made publicly available. The policy will address, at a minimum:

1. Minimum organizational requirements based on designated property use
2. Potential disqualifications
3. Opportunities for less formal entities (e.g., long term leases to community associations for urban garden)

### 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.

The Land Bank will finalize a development agreement template by September 2019, before the disposition of any properties.

### 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 year of operation, the Land Bank's primary source of property will be through the City's direct sale mechanism. Tax delinquent properties transferred via this method will be acquired for approximately \$2,000 to \$3,000 each, depending on closing costs and attorney fees.

The Land Bank will 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 2019-2020, the Land Bank will not sell any property at market value to a private for-profit buyer, and will therefore not have additional revenue from such sales.

## 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 **(appointment complete)**;
- Two members appointed by Richmond City Council **(appointments pending)**;
- Two members appointed by the Mayor of the City of Richmond **(appointments complete)**;
- Four members appointed by the MWCLT Board of Directors **(appointments complete)**.

As of June 2019, seven of the nine CAP members have been appointed.

Beginning in 2020, MWCLT will seek appointees that serve or represent historically underserved communities in the City of Richmond.

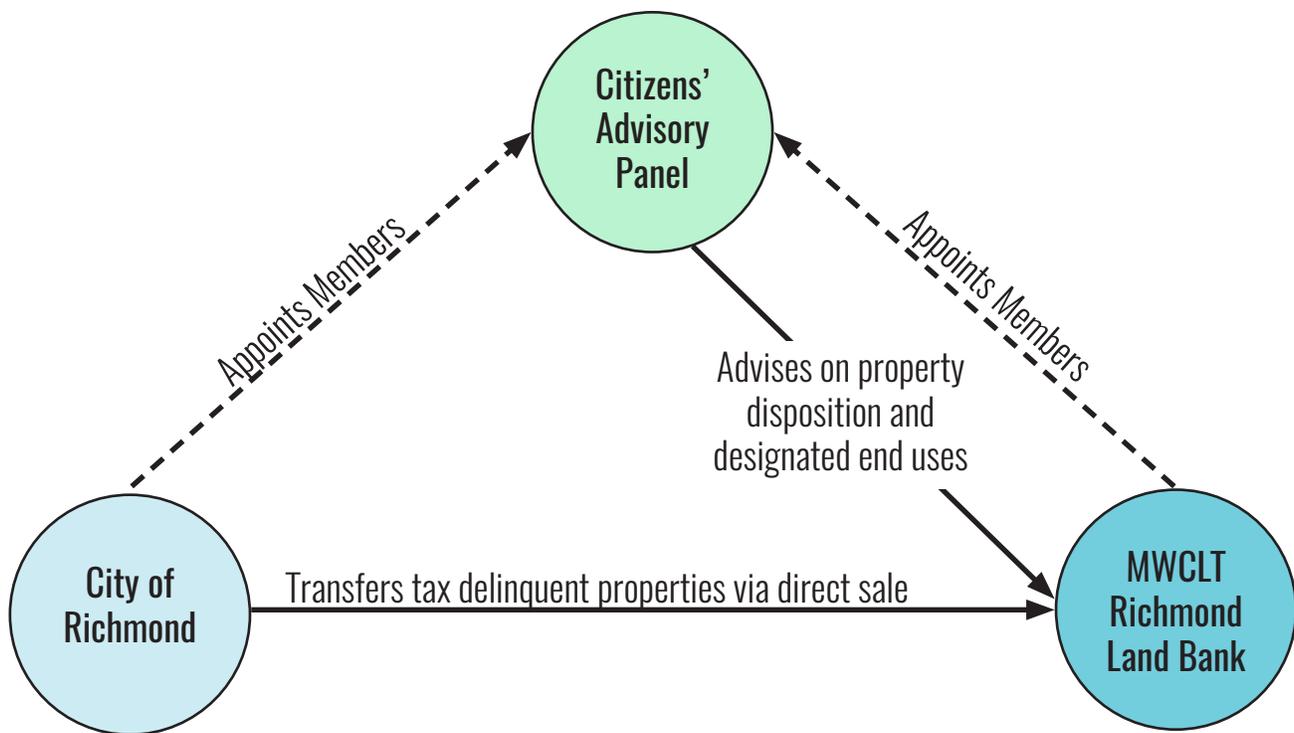


FIGURE xx: Relationship between the City, CAP, and Land Bank

### STRATEGY 3.1.4

**By-laws and procedures.** Current CAP members have held three organizational meetings with Land Bank staff as of June 2019 to begin drafting by-laws and procedures. These include but are not limited to membership requirements and expectations, voting procedures, and term schedules. The CAP will finalize these policies by September 2019.

### STRATEGY 3.1.5

**Meeting plans.** CAP meetings will be open to the public. It 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. CAP members will be responsible for designating specific meeting dates, times, and locations. Minutes from these meetings will also be made publicly available.

### 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.

### **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 community stakeholders and leaders, will develop a comprehensive Community Engagement Plan that will inform how MWCLT will gather input from the public, especially residents of prioritized communities, on Land Bank goals and activities. This plan will be completed during 2019-2020.

## OBJECTIVE 3.3

**The Land Bank will develop ways to measure its progress and track achievement of goals.** These criteria remain unchanged from the 2018-2019 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.

### 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.

The Land Bank will show its progress in future annual plans and on its website.

## 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.** MWCLT will create avenues for hosting and sharing this information.

### STRATEGY 3.4.1

*Maintain an inventory of all available and transferred properties.* The Land Bank will utilize a publicly-accessible property database that allows each property record to be posted on the web in a searchable, browsable format. Community members should be able to easily find out if and where the Land Bank owns properties near them.

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 have an operational website with this capacity by September 2019.

### 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.



Rowhouses in Church Hill (Will Fisher via flickr)

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